

श्री:

THIRUMALIRUNJOLAIMALAI

(SRI ALAGAR KOVIL)

STALA PURANA

PART I.

Introduction to the Stala Purana.

श्रीः

CHAPTER I.

A bird's eye view of
THE HISTORY OF THIRUMALIRUNJOLAIMALAI.

Origin of the Temple and its Fort.

The History of this temple, unlike that of the other Temples of India, is of a peculiar nature. For, the History of this Temple apart from its mystic origin, and taking it up at least from the period of known references, is almost coeval with the history of the kingdoms that flourished in this part of the country. Like the *Vatican City*, the Fort of Alagapuri with its City and Temple of Thirumalirunjolai has ever been more or less a Socio-Religious centre of activity. After the original consecration by Dharma Devata and Visvakarma, the later extensions of the Temple and the City Fortifications were constructed or rather renovated by King Malayadhwaja Pandya son of Kulasekhara the Founder of the Pandyan kingdom and dynasty and the reputed father of Goddess Sri Meenakshi. King Malayadhwaja and his host of successors were the immediate patrons and protectors of this institution. The existence of the Fort and Palaces go into the remotest past. Cf: “மதில்சூழ் செரலைமலைக்கரசே” which means “Oh! Thou King of the Solai Malais enshrined in a Fortified Temple” in one of the Pasurams of Sri Periyalwar who is reputed to have flourished about B. C. 3055.

Patronage of the Temple by the Pandya Dynasty.

As regards the long array of the Pandyan Kings, patrons and devotees of this Temple, there is no authentic single record. Various lists of Pandyan Kings of the Pandyan Dynasty have been given by various scholars, but unfortunately no two of them agree. Certain kings and certain capitals can with certainty be fixed which have corroborative contemporary references.

Such references are to be found in the Ithihasas of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and various works of Literature by contemporary poets and scholars and also in such of the ancient inscriptions as abound in this Temple and elsewhere that are left extant after many a vandalistic destruction.

Patronage of the Temple by other Dynasties also.

This Temple was not only under royal patronage and protection from time immemorial but was also the residence of many a royal dynasty as the existence of the ruined forts and battlements, palaces and gateways demonstrate to this day, and which will be all noticed in their appropriate places herein. Next to the Pandya dynasty, the other Royal Houses' that either reigned over this Temple-City or had it under their royal protection were the dynasties of the Chola, the later Pandyas and the Royal Houses of Ceylon, Bana, Hoysala, Vijayanagar, and the Naicks, though for brief spells the Maharattas and the Moslems in their sovereign capacity looked after the welfare of this Temple until at last it went over to the hands of the East India Company in 1790.

Who were these Pandyas?

Who were these Pandyas who seem to have built the Temple of Lord Alagar even before the 'avatar' of Sri Meenashi? Where did their Kingdom exist? Who were the members of their dynasty? When did they flourish? Who were those devout Pandyas who have so indissolubly linked their history with this Divine Kshetra which has necessitated a reference to them in these notes? An answer to these and other kindred questions will swell to many pages. Yet we cannot refrain from having at least a skeleton idea of the above items so far as it is relevant to this Kshetra.

The Pandyas traced their descent from the Aryans—References in the Ramayana.

To find out who these Pandyas were we have to go back to such ancient Sangam and the immediate post Sangam

works which all trace the lineage of the Pandyas from Chandra 'The Moon'. They were hence Aryans. It is worthy of note that the Telugu-speaking Andhras, the Malayalam-speaking Keralas, the Canarese-speaking Cannadas and the Tamil-speaking Dramidas (द्रमिडाः) were all Aryans. References to the Pandyas are to be found in very many ancient works including the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

ततो हेममयं दिव्यं मुक्तामणि विभूषितम् ।

मुक्ता कवाटं पाण्ड्यानां गता द्रक्ष्यथ वानराः ॥

Ramayana Kishkinda Kandam Sarga 41—Stanza 19.

तथैवान्ध्रांश्च पुण्ड्रांश्च चोलान्पाण्ड्यान्सकेरलान् ।

(ibid) Sarga 41 St. 12.

Scholars think that when Sri Rama went to Ceylon the then reigning Pandyan monarch was Anantaguna Pandya with his capital at Kavatapuram.

Theory of the descent of the Tamils from China.

Of course Scholars take a pride in ascribing to the Triple Tamil Royal Dynasties of "Moo-Vendar" "மூவேந்தர்" an origin that may be at once interesting and intriguing. One school of scholars theorise that the Tamils descended into upper India from China via the Himalayan Passes and occupied the territory of which Tamra-Lipti or "Tamluk" in South West Bengal was the capital and that they derived their name of Tamils from that City and that they after several thousands of years got lower down into the south of the Peninsula. The first batch is stated to have gone to the farthest south and that they were the Pandyas; they are reputed to have styled themselves as "Pazhayar" பழையர்—cf பழையமாரன். This term or its synonym "பாண்டு" is stated to give the word "பண்டையர்" for the elder colonists. And "பண்டையர்" stood transformed into Pandyas.

They say the second batch of colonists occupied the middle portion of the South and they were the Cholas. The Cholas were known as திரையர் since they came to the south by the sea route. Cf. Thondaman Ilan-Thyrian தொண்டமான் இளந்திரையன். The third batch of colonists is stated to have occupied the north and western portions of South India and they were the Keralas or Cheras. The Cheras are stated to have been known as Vanavar (வானவர்) or Celestials. Cf. Cheran-Vanavar (சேரன்வானவர்). These scholars successfully point out the striking similarity between the Chinese language of the celestial nation and the Tamil language as illustrated hereunder:

Tamil	English	Chinese
(Nee) நீ	you	(Nee)
(Nan) நான்	I	(Gnan)
(Yam) யாம்	We	(Yam)
(Pen) பெண்	Girl	(pen)
(Kan) கண்	Place	(Kan)
(Yeer) யேர்	Two	(Yeer)
(Mai) மை	Collyrium	(Mai)

Still others opine that the Tamils were a branch of the Lemurians that went up north from the Lemurian continent for purposes of colonisation and that they were the Dravidian races. Whatever may be the theories as regards the original home of the Pandyas they styled themselves as Aryans and were ascribed by the ancient writers to a Solar or a Lunar lineage and as such were Aryans. Whatever lineage modern controversial scholars may be pleased to ascribe to them, these ancients that are now no more to take part in the controversy, themselves chose to claim their lineage to the Solar or Lunar dynasties only.

Where and when did the Pandya Kingdom exist?

The ancient Pandya country was bounded on the east by the sea, south by the river Pahruli and the country beyond west by the sea and on the north by the river Kumari while the

of the Tamil Country as a whole was during the time of Silappadigaram situate between Vengadam and the Kumari Sea—
 (“செடியோன் குன்றமுத்தொடியோன் பெளயமுத்தமிழ் வரம் பற்றித்தநன் புன
 னன்னுடி”)—Silappadhikaram Venirkadhai ll 1 and 2. Their original capital was Mathura (Then Mathura) far south of the Kumari (now submerged). They were at least as ancient as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as referred to elsewhere herein. In some of the oldest Tamil works the extent of their country and the vastness of their literature are all gloriously referred to. Between the Pahruli river and the Kumari river alone, which had become submerged in the ocean, there were 49 Nadus comprising the following :—

(1) Thenga Nadu	7	(5) Kunram Nadu	7
(2) Mathura Nadu	7	(6) Guna Karai Nadu	7
(3) Mun Palai	7	(7) Kurum Panai Nadu	7
(4) Pin Palai	7		
			49

Beyond the Pahruli river there was the Then Pali etc. The extent of these 49 Districts was 700 Kavudams (about 1000 miles). Evidently this refers to a period anterior to the period of the Ramayana. For, it is stated that these 49 Districts alone comprised about 700 kavudams. And still further south, the country of Then Palai is referred to. For what distance further south, Then Palai extended, there is no information available in Literature. Whatever that may be, the fact remains that Lanka was situate on the Equator and in the Meridian called the Lanka Meridian and that the distance between the Mahendra Mountain, the more or less partially submerged hills and Lanka was about 100 yojanas (hundred here may be an approximate round figure) or 800 miles. The present distance between the partially submerged Mahendra Hills (about 9° north of the Equator) and the Equator may be about 650 miles. From these factors we may fix up with some tolerable

certainty Lanka, the Mahendra, the Kumari River, the Pahruli River and the 49 Districts including Then Mathura and Then Palai.

The first deluge. There have been more than one submersion here. One submersion saw the disappearance of the country beyond the Kumari Kodu. Another and earlier one saw the disappearance of Lanka itself which might have been a part of Lemuria or Then Palai or an island by itself, but whose distance from the mainland which might have been slight in the beginning having become broadened latterly to 100 Yojanas at the time of the Ramayana. To identify the Simhala Dwipa with Lanka where the Chiranjeevin Sri Vibhishana is reigning is not warranted. There is nothing improbable in the famous Mahendra Range and the Agastya Hills and the Kumari Hills (கும்ரிக் கோடு) of the early Sangam works, all coalescing in the southern regions and branching into those small hillocks that one sees submerged in the sea where laves the triple commingled waters of the Bay, the Sea and the Ocean. All the vast countries between the Kumari River and Lanka including the Then Palai having all become submerged in successive deluges, the proud literature of this region too is no more extant, but a few scattered remnants alone remain. A long line of Pandyan Emperors, guardians and custodians of the 1st Sangam held sway up to Kadungon Vazhuthi's time. During his reign practically the whole of the Then Pandya country with its capital of Then Mathura was submerged by the ire of the ocean.

Having lost their capital Then Mathura and the country around including the Pahruli River, the Kumari Hills etc., (பஹ்ரூலி யாற்றுடன் பன்மலையடுக்கத்து கும்ரிக் கோடும் கொடுங்கடல்கொள்ள—Silapadigaram xi ll-19 and 20) by the inroads of the sea, the Pandyas went up north, and established their capital at Kavatapura. At that time though the river Pahruli and Kumari Hills were gone, having been submerged in the Indian Ocean, the Kumari 'River' remained and vast countries south of the Kumari also. The river

Kumari was a great Thirtha resorted to by all. Sri Hanuman crossed over to Lanka from this Kumarikkodu main land and the partially submerged Mahendra Mountains, for the Mahendra Mountains were not like the other ranges high and lofty but were low and surrounded by the ocean Cf.

चित्रसानुनगः श्रीमान् महेन्द्रः पर्वतोत्तमः ।

जातरूपमयः श्रीमान् अवगाडो महार्णवम् ॥

Kishkinda Kanda Ch. 41 St. 21.

This was the Second Sangam Age. The events mentioned in the Ramayana occurred during this age. Cf. the reference to Kavatapuram in Sri Valmiki Ramayana (supra).

The Second Deluge.

Then there was yet another deluge. In this great deluge the famous Kavatapuram with its gates of gold and pearls and rubies got submerged in the ocean. Once more the Pandyas had to go further north and found a new capital. This time it was at Manalure. This was the city so constantly referred to in the Mahabaratha.

References in the Mahabharata.

The references to "Pandya" "Dramida", "Manalure" etc. in the following excerpts from the Mahabaratha are interesting.

समुद्र तीरण शनैः मणलूरं जगामह ।

Adhi. 235—St. 20.

दूतेन तरसा चोलं विजित्यद्रमिडेश्वरम् ।
ततोरत्नान्युपादाय पाण्ड्यस्यविषयं ययौ ॥

Sabha 33—St. 20.

पाण्ड्यं द्रमिडराजानं श्वशुरं मलयध्वजम् ।
सदूतैस्तं वशेकृत्वा मणलूरेश्वरं तदा ॥

Sabha 33—St. 29.

ताम्रपर्णीं ततो गत्वा कन्यातीर्थमतीत्य च ।
दक्षिणां च दिशं सर्वां विजित्य कुरुनन्दनः ॥

Sabha 32—St. 75.

सतं (अगस्त्यालयं) प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा मलयं भरतर्षभ ।
लङ्घयित्वा तु माद्रेयः ताम्रपर्णीं नदीं शुभाम् ॥

Sabha 33—St. 31.

The Maritime Greatness of the Pandyas.

It should be noted that at this time of the Mahabharata period, the River Kanya Thirtham was resorted to by 'Madhreyas' and *the river was crossed* by him. Note these words "अतीत्य च" in the above excerpt; and then he goes and conquers the country further south also—दक्षिणाञ्च दिशंगत्वा etc., going further south after crossing the Kumari. This was the Third Sangam age. How long was their capital situate in Manalure it is difficult to say. But from the inscriptions so far deciphered it appears that the capital might have been changed from and rechanged to this place more than once. Or it may be quite possible there might have been more than one city of that name. There is now a place called Manalure a few miles east of Madura, which is reputed to have been a Pandyan Capital. There is another Manalure near Tinnevely, and which Sri. P. V. Jagadeesa Iyer states was the Pandyan Capital. But the references to Arjuna having reached Manalure "समुद्रतीरेण शनैः" make us doubt if there might not have been a sea-coast city by the name of Manalure. Moreover there are constant references to the city of "Alaivai" being the Pandyas' Capital. Or could Manalure and 'Alaivai' be one and the same city? Scholars think that the Pandyas had their capital sometimes at Urugapura the maritime city of Negapatam a flourishing city even during the time of the Mahabharata. The Pandyas were a maritime nation and there are many references quoted by scholars as to the maritime greatness of the Tamils.

- i. In Sangam Literature they are often referred to as பெருந்தேவர்கள்.
- ii. Their conveyances for trade or war in the sea were called நாवியம் (Navy)

- iii. The Romans, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Assyrians, and the Egyptians, were trading with them.
- iv. Egyptian mummies were being clothed in South Indian fabrics.
- v. The *raison d'être* for the Pandyas having the "Meena Kethana" or the Fish Emblem for their flag is stated to be in significance of their absolute freedom and mastery over the many oceans as the Fish itself enjoys in its watery element.

(cf. also the references under the heading "Objects of interest")

The maritime fame of the Pandya Nad was so vast and great in those ancient days that it evoked not only surprise and admiration from other nations, but kindled also fear, envy and jealousy among many. W. H. Schoff refers to the extent of South Indian trade to Egypt and other countries in the IIIrd Millenium B. C.—"thousands of years before the emergence of the Greeks from savagery". A highly developed commercial system prevailed for the interchange of the Egyptian and South Indian products in those times. In the high water mark of the ancient South Indian civilisation, one of the Dravidians' pride was their active Merchant Marine that plied between Europe, Africa and India. The Indian Merchant Marine, it should be remembered had access to Greece and Rome via the Suez Canal which was dug by one of the Sesostrises in the XXth Century B. C. and re-dug again and again up to the XVth Century B. C. and lastly by Darius in the Vth Century B. C. The flourishing trade referred to in the Periplus (80) A. D. as having been in existence between India, Malaya, Malacca, China etc. in the XIIth Century B. C. and the reference by Strabo the historian (25 B. C.) that he himself saw about 120 ships ready to sail on their voyage from Hormus to India are all revealing to a degree. Our surprise will be the greater and the

fact will appear to be a sort of revelation to us when we see Fa Hian in his Memoirs (a work of 400 A. D.) referring to a *Merchantship of the Brahmins* which went from India to China via Java and Sumatra in which he travelled along with a crew of 200 who had provided themselves with provisions for a journey of 50 days!

In all probability the Pandyas might evidently have had their court some time in their inland capital city and some time at the sea coast capital city, which is not imprabable.

Chitravahana Pandya-contemporary and father-in-law of Arjuna.

During the time of the Mahabharata, the name of the Pandyan King that ruled over the Pandya country with Manalure as capital was Chitravahana (मणलुरेश्वरं राजन् धर्मज्ञं चित्रवाहनम्—Adhi P. 235—S. 17). His daughter was Chitrangada who married Arjuna, their offspring being Babruvahana (Cf. Adi Parva ch. 63 St. 81) Cf. also the reference by Murunjiyur Mudinagaroyar a contemporary of Perunchotrudhyan Cheraladan describing the latter as having supplied the Pandava army with food for all the 18 days of the war..

The Great Sangams or Academies of the Tamils & their Pandyan Royal Patrons.

In the preceeding paragraphs, reference has been made to the "Sangams". Various have been the versions prevalent with regard to the origin, composition, duration and activity etc. of the Sangams. It will be beyond the scope of this work to enter into a detailed disquisition of the same. Hence a short reference only is given below about the "Sangam" that was so dear to our Lord Sri Sangathazhagar or Alagar, "President or Founder of the Sangams". But according to the Halasya Mahatmya (51st Leela) when Brahma had finished 10 Asvamedha sacrifices at a holy place on the Ganges near Kasi he wanted to have the Avabritha Snana bath in the Ganges with his 3 consorts. While

on their way Saraswathi tarried a bit behind attracted by the melodious music of a celestial minstrel. When Brahma noticed her absence during the bath he cursed Saraswathi to be born upon the earth 48 times. On entreaty the punishment was reduced, with a concession that she may be born simultaneously in 48 forms at one and the same time representing each full letter of the Sanskrit Alphabet. Each form became a Tamil poet of extraordinary brilliance adorning the 1st Sanga Palagai of Madura with Sri Sundara Linga presiding over them as the 49th poet during Vamsa Sehhara Pandya's reign. This in short is the origin as per the Mahatmya.

According to Kalamegha Pulavar and certain other poets, the particulars obtainable with slight modifications, are as follows :—

I. Sangam.

- (i) Place of Existence:—Then Mathurai.
- (ii) Duration :—From 'Kaychina Vazhudhi to Kadungon Vazhudhi (89 Pandyas of whom seven were poets): 4400 years.
- (iii) Number of poets :—4449 poets (according to Kalamegha) 549 Members (according to Veera-chozhiyam)
- (iv) Prominent poets of the period:—Agasthya, Siva, Kumara, Virisadayattanar, Mudinagarayar, Panam-paranar, Tholkappiyanar, Nidhi Kizhavanar, Adhankottasiriyanar.
- (v) Important works of the period :—Agathiyam, Tholkappiyam, Kakkai Patiniyam, Avaniyam, Natratham, Vamanam, Paripadal, Jayantam, Gunanul, Muthunarai, Muthu Kurugu, Kalaniya Virai (consisting of Iyattamil, Isaittamil and Nadakattamil).

II. Sangam.

- (i) Place of existence:—Kavatapuram.
- (ii) Duration :—From Vendod-Chezhan to Mudithirumarar (59 Pandyas of whom 5 were poets)—3700 years.

(iii) Number of poets:— 3700 according to Irayanar Agapporul: Members 509.

(iv) Prominent poets of the period:—Vellure Kappyian, Siru Pandarangan, Thirayanmaran, Tuvaraikoman, Kiranthayar,

(v) Important works of the period:—Kali-kurugu, Vyala-malai Agaval.

III. Sangam.

(i) Place of existence:—Uththira Mathura.

(ii) Duration:—Mudithirumaran to Ugra-peru-Vazhudhi during whose reign the Sangam was dissolved; (49 Pandyas of whom 3 were poets): 1850 years.

(iii) Number of poets:—449: Members 49.

(iv) Prominent poets of the period:—Irayanar, Ugra Peruvazhudhi, Kapilar, Baranar, Nakkirar, Perundevanar, Nachchumanar, Kulapathi Nayanar, Alangudi Vanganar, Tiruvalluwar, Avvai etc.

(v) Important works of the period:—Nedunthogai, Kurunrhogai, Natrinai, Aga Nanooru, Pura Nanooru, Ainguru-nooru, Pathirru Pattu etc. Thirukkural was the last work of this period (2000 years ago).

Post Sangam period.

(i) Duration:—200 years.

(ii) Prominent poets of the period:—Athi Veera Rama, Pugazhendi, Ottakkooththar, Kambar, Ambigapathi, Tamil Dandi, Villipuththurar etc.

Roughly the above analysis gives us the information that the Sangams flourished for about 10,000 years, and had nearly 200 Pandyan Monarchs as their Royal Patrons and of whom about 15 were Royal Poets. The Sangams were graced by nearly 10,000 Poets with a membership of about 1200 and an ocean of glorious literature.

Seeing the low depths to which the once mighty Sangam had fallen some noble souls under the leadership of Sri Pandithurai Thevar have on an auspicious date 15—9—1901 started a Fourth Sangam under the patronage of the noble house of Ramnad. May the all merciful Lord Sangathazhagar shower his choicest blessings once more on these efforts of His devotees.

The IIIrd Deluge.

As already noticed, the Pandyas seem to have ruled long with Manalure as their capital. Again owing to the ire of the ocean the river Kumari became submerged in the ocean in the deluge that set in at the end of the Treta Yuga and the advent of the Kali Yuga. Maritime Manalure (for we find from the inscriptions that there have been more than one Manalure) if such a one existed, must also have been washed away, for, we find the Pandyan Kings having shifted their capital to Kurukapuri at the mouth of the Thamraparni (Korkhi, Kurugure or Kolki of the Periplus.)

The various capitals of the Pandyas.

The Pandyan capital then changed to many other places. Kalyanapuram seems to have been another capital when Madura did not come into existence at all, its site having been a Kadamba Forest. The other capitals seem to have been Alagapuri (Thirumalirunjolai), Uthirakosamangai, Nallure, North Madura, Madura, Madakkulam, Varadhavalam and lastly and finally Madura. There appears to have been more than one Madura in existence. Sri Nakkirar refers to a Madura east of Thiruparangunram. One Kulasekhara whose father was Sampanna Pandya is stated to have been the king who established his capital at Kalyanapura.

The Pandyan monarchs referred to in the Puranas.

We shall just have a glimpse of some of those sovereigns who had the Meenakethana as their Royal emblem, consequent on their deep devotion to the first or Matsya Avatāra of the Lord,

and also of the later sovereigns who were connected with the History of our Temple as noted in the inscriptions at Sri Alagar Temple or otherwise. In the Sthalapurana of Sri Alagar Hills (Ch. IV) Kulasekhara Pandya father of Malayadhwaja Pandya is referred to and the future birth of Sri Meenakshi also as daughter of Malayadhwaja is hinted therein. Hence the earliest Pandya referred to in Puranic Literature now extant is Kulasekhara. The names of the Pandyas noticed in the Madura Sthalapurana are noted below:—

- Kulasekhara: Founder of Madura. He changed his capital from Kalyanapura to Madura.
- Malayadhwaja: Son of Kulasekhara. Reputed to have reigned for 10,000 years.
- Thatathaka: (Sri Meenakshi) married to Sundara Pandya.
- Ugra Pandya: Married Kanthimathi, daughter of Soma Sekhara Chola of Kanchi.
- Vira Pandya:
- Abisheka Pandya:
- Vikrama Pandya: Jain Cholas' Invasion-Anamalai episode.
- Raja Sekhara:
- Kulothunga: 10,000 wives and 60,000 children.
- Anantaguna: Nagamalai and Pasumalai episodes.
Sri Rama's visit to Alagar Hills.
- Kula Bushna: Jain Cholas' invasion.
- Rajendra: War with the Cholas and then four Pandyas after him.
- Sundareswara—Padasekhara: War with the Chola. Chola drowned in the Madura ditch.)
- Varaguna:
- Raja Raja:
- Suguna and then 23 Pandyas after him.

Kirthi Vibhushna. 23rd from Suguna. Deluge took place in this reign.

Vamsa Sekhara: Halasya town created to the south of the Vrisha-bagiri or *Alagar Hills*. First Sangam stated to have been established.

Vamsa Choodamani: Contemporary of Nakkirar, Kapilar and Banar; and after him 14 other Pandyas.

Kulesha : Fifteenth from Vamsa Choodamani.

Arimarthana : Contemporary of Manicka Vachaka and nine other Pandyas.

Jagannadha: and nine other Pandyas.

Kubja : Ninth from Sri Jagannadha and contemporary of Gnanasambhanda.

The difference in the names of these Pandyas *i. e.*, the Sangam Pandyas and the Puranic Pandyas is significant—the latter having predominantly Sanskrit appellations.

Kubja Pandya's successors.

After Kubja Pandya 5 other kings seem to have reigned as follows :—

(i) Nedunchezhiyan I. (50—75 A. D.) was the King referred to in the Silappadigaram. It was he who executed very unjustly Kovalan the husband of Kannaki the would be Patni Devata or our Lady of Chastity. It is also stated that he was known as Ariya-Padai-Kadandha-Nedun-Chezhiyan. 'Ariya Padai Kadanda' may mean either he crossed the Fort and cantonment of Ariyapadai (near Chola-Maligai near Kumbaconam) or one who defeated the Aryan troops.

(ii) Verri—Ver—Chezhiyan (75—90 A. D.)

(iii) Nedun-Chezhiyan II (90—128 A. D.)

(iv) Ugra-Peruvazhudhi (128—140 A. D.) who captured Kanapper and who was a contemporary of Avvai, Nayanar etc.

Kural was published by Sri Thiruvalluwar in his court before a brilliant assembly of '48'

(v) Nedu Maran: (140—150 A. D.) These are the Pandyas in short that are referred to in the Puranas.

A glimpse at the history of the Pandyas.

Broadly speaking the history of the Pandya Nad can be divided into the following distinctive periods:—

- (i) From the earliest times or the mythical period up to the reign of Kaychina Vazhudhi (Then Mathura).
- (ii) From Kaychina Vazhudhi to Kadungon Vazhudhi (Then Mathura.)
- (iii) From Vendod Chezhiyan to Mudithirumaran (Kavata-puram etc.)
- (iv) From Mudithirumaran to Kulasekhara (Manalure.)
- (v) From Kulasekhara the founder of Madura to Kubja Pandya—the Puranic Pandya (Madura)
- (vi) The Kalabhra Interregnum.
- (vii) The first Empire—from Kadungon to Raja Simha II (590—920 A. D.)
- (viii) The Cholas Suzerainty 920—1190 A. D.
- (ix) The Second Empire 1190—1324 A. D.
- (x) The Sultanate 1324—1378 A. D.
- (xi) The Suzerainty of Vijayanagar and the Viceroys of Vijayanagar 1379—1451 A. D.
- (xii) The Bana Pandyas. 1451—1499 A. D.
- (xiii) Ascendancy of Vijayanagar 1499—1565 A. D.
- (xiv) The Nayak Dynasty 1559—1736 A. D.
- (xv) Chanda Sahib's usurpation 1736—1739 A. D.
- (xvi) The Maharatta Intervention 1739—1744 A. D.
- (xvii) The Mahomedan Intervention and anarchy 1744—1790 A. D.
- (xviii) The British assumption 1790 A. D.

From the first up to the sixth period above mentioned there is very little of recorded or authentic history to proceed upon. There are some materials available for the period subsequent to the Kalabhra Interregnum. In the succeeding paragraphs it is proposed to deal with such of the monarchs as may have had any connection either directly or indirectly with the fortunes and the history of Sri Kallalagar Fort and Temple.

The 1st Pandyan Empire and its Emperors:—590–920 A. D.

1. *Kadungon* 590—620 A. D. Some scholars think that this Emperor could be the Kadungon Vazhudhi the last Emperor of the 1st Sangam Age which can scarcely be the case for obvious reasons.

2. *Maravarman Avanisulamoni* 620—640 A. D. He was the son of Kadungon.

3. *Sendan Jayantavarman* 640—670 A. D. He was Avanisulamoni's son.

4. *Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman*, who is supposed to have been the son of Sendan, reigned from 670 to 710 A.D. He conquered the Paravas and subjugated the country of Kurunadu. He took out expeditions against the Keralas and the Pallavas. He was a victor in the battles of Pali, Nelveli, Sennilam and Vilinam. Some identify this King with either Ninra Sir Nedumaran or Kun Pandya, contemporary of Gnanasambhandha and Siruththondar. He is reputed to have performed a Hiranya Garbha and a Thulabhara.

5. *Kochchadayan Rana Dhira Jatila*, who reigned from 710 to 740 A. D. was the son and successor of Arikesari. He had the Birudas of Vanavan, Solan, Chembiyan etc. probably with reference to the conquests he had in those Kingdoms. He captured Mangalapuram (Mangalore). His other Birudas were "Madhura Karnatagan" and "Kongar-Koman"

6. *Maravarma Pallava Bhanjana* alias *Raja Simha I*, son of Ranadhira succeeded his father in 740 A. D. and reigned over his father's empire till 765 A. D. He was one of the most renowned of the Pandyan monarchs. His campaign against the Pallava Nandivarman and his capture of Nandigram after a prolonged siege and his subjugating the Pallavas after a series of battles procured him the title of "Pallava Bhanjana". In the battles of Neduvayal, Karamadai, Mannikkurichchi, Thirumangai, Puvalore, Kodumbalure and Kulambure he was victorious. He renewed Kudal, Vanji and Koli. He celebrated the ceremonies of Tulabhara and Hiranya Garbha. His Agnapti Marangari is reputed to have constructed the Sri Narasimha's temple at Anamalai (in 770 A. D.) near Alagar Hills as disclosed by the inscriptions found there.

7. The next Emperor that succeeded to the Imperial Throne of the Pandyas was Raja Simha's son *Maranjadayan* or *Jatila Varman Nedunjadayan Parantaka I* otherwise popularly known also as *Varaguna Maharaja* (765—815 A.D.) His father's Agnapti Marangari continued to be his minister also. Marangari who was also known as Madhurakavi is not considered by scholars to be identical with the Alwar of the same name. Marangari's brother Maran-Eyinan, Murthi-Eyinan, and Sathan Ganapathi were all Maha Samanthas of the Pandyan Emperors.

8. *Sri Maran Sri Vallabha* deciple of Sri Periyalwar, (815—862 A.D.) succeeded his father Varaguna Maharaja. His Birudas were "Ekavira", "Parachakra Kolahala". He is referred to in certain Alagarkoil inscriptions. M. E. R. 313/30 an inscription in the second year of his reign styles him as Thri-bhuvana Chakra Varthin Konerinmaikondan Sri Vallabha Deva. A tax free gift of the village of Kunjarangudi by one Alagandar alias Tannila Pallava Rayan of Korkaiyure in Kuda Nadu for the expenses of the sacred bath, offerings, and worship of Lord Alagar and his Nachiar when they are seated in the *Sundara Pandyan Mandapa* on the day of Visakha in the month of Ani

with a view to secure merit for his sister, is detailed in this inscription. The inscription is dated 2nd year of Sri Vallabha and hence is of the year 817 A. D. This inscription is also important, in that it gives a long list of the taxes etc. that prevailed during the period. The tenure *Karanmai* is also referred to. The inscription also refers to the fact that this Endowment is supported by a copper plate, stone inscriptions and the fixing of Thiru-Azhikkallu the usual forms then prevailing. There is also another inscription which has reference to Sri Vallabha on a detached stone slab fixed into the south wall of the Munayadaraiyan Thirumandapam. The contents of the same could not be easily deciphered.

An inscription dated the fifth year of Sri Vallabha inscribed on 3 faces of a broken pillar found partly buried in the Temple area and now preserved in the *Sundararaja Museum* at Alagar Hills refers to the throne of Sri Vallabha as "*Veera Simhasana*" and that Thirumalirunjolai then formed part of Kil-Iranya Muttam. Some reference to the offerings for the "*Alwars of the Sannadhi*" at Sri Alagar Hills is made therein, thus showing that the worship of the images of the Alwars has begun in a regular manner even as early as the beginning of the IXth century A. D. Sri Vallabha took out expeditions against the Gangas, the Cholas, the Pallavas, the Kalingas, the Maghadas etc. His victories at Kudamukku (Kumbakonam), Karur, Vilinam and against the Ceylonese King Sena I are important. He seems in the end to have been defeated at Tellaru and Arasalaru by Nripathunga Pallava.

9. Sri Vallabha left two sons, *Varaguna Varman* and *Veera Narayana Sadayan alias Parantaka II*. Varaguna the elder succeeded his father on his death and reigned from 862-880 A.D. He sustained a severe defeat at Sri Perambiyam in 880 A.D.

10. After him came *Parantaka II* (880-900 A. D.) His military prowess also was not of a high order. He is stated to have got defeated at the hands of some of his neighbouring kings.

11. *Maravarman Raja Simha II* (900-920 A. D.) was the last of the Emperors of this period. He was defeated by Parantaka Chola I in 907 A. D. and Madura too was afterwards captured by Parantaka and annexed to the Chola Kingdom. With this the first Empire of the Pandyas ends and the supremacy of the Cholas begins from now.

The Cholas' conquest & their Supremacy (920-1190 A. D.)

From 920 to 1190 A. D. the Cholas were holding their sway over the Pandya Nad also.

After the defeat of Raja Simha II and his flight from Madura in A.D. 920 *Parantaka Chola I* exercised full sway over Madura. But in 949 A. D. the Rashtrakuta King Krishna III defeated the Cholas at the battle of Takkolam and killed also Rajaditya the eldest son of Parantaka, when after a period of nearly 30 years the Pandyan Kindom regained a bit of its freedom, under the efforts of a certain *Veera Pandya* who took the head of the Chola (probably that of some Chola Prince) at the battle of Chivur that was waged against Parantaka II (Sundara Chola).

But a few years afterwards, Aditya II son of Parantaka II avenged his father's defeat by defeating Veera Pandya in battle by capturing him and putting him to death.

In 985 A. D. *Raja Raja* ascended the Chola Throne and reigned till 1016 A. D. S. I. I. Vol. II page 250 refers to his having conquered the Pandyas. The name of the Pandya King that was stated to have been defeated by Raja Raja was Amara Bujhanga. M. E. R. 80 of 1910 refers to a gift of lands by Raja Raja the Great to Lord Alagar. During his reign the Chola yoke was borne quietly by the Pandyas. So far as recorded inscriptional evidence goes M. E. R. 80 of '10 is the earliest Chola inscription found in this Temple.

The Chola Pandya Viceroy.

After Raja Raja's demise his son *Rajendra* who was also called *Madurantaka* by his father succeeded him (1013-1033 A. D.) *Rajendra* took out an expedition against the Pandyan King in the 10th year of his reign and after conquering him in battle he installed his son "the glorious Chola Pandya" as the Viceroy of the Pandyan Kingdom and made the Pandya Nad a protectorate of the Chola Empire. The first royal Viceroy was *Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya* son of *Rajendra I* (1020—1045 A. D.) He was known as *Siyan Sri Chola Pandya Dewa*. Reference is made to this monarch in M. E. R. 4 of '32 at Sri Alagar Temple. All the succeeding Viceroy also were known as "Chola Pandyas". After *Rajendra* the Chola Emperor came *Rajathiraja I* (1033—1053 A. D.) Viceroy *Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya* alias *Siyan Sri Chola Pandya* continued in this reign also till 1045 A. D. After him came the Viceroy *Maravarman Vikrama Chola Pandya* (1045—63 A. D.) During the next reign of *Rajendra Deva* (1053—1063 A. D.) also the Chola Yoke was peacefully borne by the Pandyas.

The Emperor *Veera Rajendra I* (1063—1070 A. D.) who came next appointed his son *Gangaikonda Chola* as Viceroy of Pandyamandalam with the title of "*Chola Pandya*". During his reign there was a revolt of the Pandyas. The Pandyan chief was trampled to death by a furious elephant.

The system of Chola Pandya Viceroy continued up to *Kuloththunga's* accession (1070 A. D.) *Kuloththunga* alias *Rajendra II*, reigned from 1070 to 1119 A. D. This Chola emperor was a Chalukya. At first he put the five Pandyan chiefs to flight when they attempted a rebellion. But later during his reign itself the Chola empire began to weaken with the result that the Pandyan feudatories began to gradually shake off the Chola Protectorate. This was the *Kuloththunga* whom the Vaishnavites called "*Krmi Kanda Chola*" contemporary of *Ramanuja*.

End of the Chola Protectorate and the attempt of the Pandyas to re-establish their sovereignty.

The most powerful of the 5 Pandyan feudatories was one *Jatavarman Sri Vallabha*. He reigned at Madura east of Madakulam. His throne is referred to as "Pandya Rajan Kalingatharaiyan". And his palace was called "Alagiya Pandyan". Coins "Drammas" were in use then. Co-Regents of this King seem to have been Parakrama Pandya and Vira Pandya. Sri Vallabha later assumed the name of *Cholantaka*. *Maravarman Thriuvana Chakravartin Parakrama Pandya Deva* was the successor of Sri Vallabha. He seems to have reigned for some time also as a contemporary of Kuloththunga.

Next to Parakrama Pandya Deva came *Jatavarman Parantaka Pandya* who along with Vikrama Chola, son and successor of Kuloththunga seems to have defeated the Telinga Bhima of Kulam.

Next came *Maravarman Sri Vallabha* (1132—1169 A.D.) His throne was "Munaiyadaraiyan" in the palace at Thirunelveli in Kil-Vembanadu.

Between 1073—1173 A. D., the Chola Pandyas seem to have continued their reign, though some of the Pandyan chiefs also were ruling in the outlying portions. The Chola Suzerains during this period being Kuloththunga I (1070—1120 A. D.), Vikrama Chola (1120—1135 A. D.), Kuloththunga II contemporary of Sekkizhar and Ottakkuththar and who plated the Chidambaram Temple with gold (1135—43 A.D.), Raja Raja II of Cholamaligai (1143—1164 A. D.) and Rajathiraja II (1164—1178 A. D.) who helped in the fratricidal wars between the Pandyan chiefs. The Pandyan fratricidal wars between 1136 to 1173 A. D., took place between Sri Vallabha's son *Kulasekhra* and another pretender *Parakrama* connected with the extinct Pandya dynasty and who were ruling in the outlying Pandyan capitals. These fought with each other for the Madurai throne of the Pandyas. About the year 1173 A. D. the Chola's

(Rajathiraja II) hold over the Pandya Nad was lost or lessening on account of the prowess of Kulasekhara. After the assassination of Parakrama Pandya and Kulasekhara's usurpation, there was an intervention by Ceylon on the side of Parakrama's son Veera Pandya and the army of Kulasekhara was at first defeated at the naval engagement near Rameswaram when Rameswaram was annexed to Lanka and then again at the battle of Thiruppathure and Amaravathy, where to a distance of 3 Leagues it was all a vast mountainous heap of dead bodies of the vanquished armies. This war in which many a naval and land battle were fought between Lanka and Pandya at last ended with the defeat of Kulasekhara Pandya and the enthronement of Veera Pandya in 1173 A. D. Veera Pandya (1173—1190 A. D.) was only a king in name, the Pandya and the Chola countries having become at this time subordinate to the valiant Parakrama Bahu of Ceylon (according to Mahavamsa). But according to the Chola version, Kulasekhara with the help of Rajathiraja II and his minister Pallavarayar defeated the Ceylonese Lankapura Dandanayaka and others and got himself restored to the throne. Kulasekhara was succeeded by his son Vikrama Pandya. But Veera Pandya son of Parakrama again sought the help of Ceylon. Veera Pandya was defeated at Nellure in 1188 A. D., by Kuloththunga III. Kuloththunga then restored Vikrama to the Madura throne.

The successor of Kuloththunga III was his son Raja Raja Deva III whose weakness led to the occupation of the Chola country by the Hoysalas under Vira Someswara. Vikrama Pandya the erst while feudatory of Kuloththunga III taking advantage of the weakness of Raja Raja Deva III, became independent. Parakrama Bahu of Ceylon was also now dead. The powerful and influential *Jatavarman Kulasekhara* now began to lay the foundation for the beginning of the Second Pandyan Empire which had a brilliant period of its history from 1190—1324 A. D.

The Second Pandyan Empire—1190—1324 A. D.

The first great emperor of the Second Empire was *Jatavarman Kulasekhara I* (1190—1217 A. D.) There are a number of inscriptions of this emperor at Sri Alagar Hills. Some of the more important are M. E. R. 275, 276, 279, 280, 281, 295, 296, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, and 303 of 1930 and 22 and 23 of 1932.

(a) *Birudas*. Many of these inscriptions begin with the introduction “புலிவெங்குழத்தி” or “புலிவெங்குழத்தி” (M. E. R. 295 of 30), some of them begin with “புலவமடக்கை” (M. E. R. 300 and 301 of 30) and some with “புலவவனிதை”. One of the *birudhas* of the Emperor was also “*Rajagambhira*”.

(b) *Malavarayar* was his minister and his name is referred to in a number of these inscriptions. Another minister of his was *Mantri Aditta Devan* alias *Pallavarayar* of *Perumanalure* and *Jayankonda Chola Sri Vallavan* in *Anda Nadu* is also referred to (M. E. R. 275 of 30). The name of another officer of the Emperor, named *Kalaveli-Nadalwan* of *Alagaimanagar* in *Vadakkalavali Nadu* is also referred to (M. E. R. 276 and 299 of 30). *Kalingaroyar* alias *Alagapperumal* (M. E. R. 296 of 30) of *Andanure* in *Muthurru-Kurram* also seems to have been one of his many ministers.

(c) The Emperor is stated to have been holding his court at *Madura* east of *Madakkulam*.

(d) The name of his throne is mentioned as “*Malavarayan*” (M. E. R. 275—279 of 30). Another throne of his was called “*Kalingarayan*” M. E. R. 302 of 30, 29 of 24, yet another was also referred to as “*Munaiyadaraiyan*” (M. E. R. 660 of 16). The throne mentioned in M. E. R. 295 of 30 is “*Veera Simhasana*”.

(e) His palace at *Madura* was known by the name of “*Puhalabaranan*”.

(f) His queen was Dharanimulududaiyar (தரணிமுலுதுடையர்). She was also called Avani Mulududaiyar.

(g) Inscriptions M. E. R. 279, 295 and 302 of '30 refer to this monarch as, having subdued the Villavar, Chembiyar, Viratar, Varatar and Pallavar.

(h) The endowments made by this monarch have been many and varied. The following are referred to in the inscriptions.

(i) Remission of taxes on the lands formed into a village called *Thirumalaiudayan Vilagam* for meeting the expenses of worship and offerings in the temple as *Devadana Irayili*. are found in (M. E. R. 275 of '30).

(ii) Endowment of lands at *Edaikkatture* alias *Alagiya-pandiyanallure* by Kalaveli Nadalwan of *Alagaimanagar* in Vadakalaveli Nadu for the Lord Sri Paramaswami at Thirumalirunjolaimalai at Kiliranya-muttam is referred to in (M. E. R. 276 of '30).

(iii) Remission of taxes is made on certain lands in *Raja Raja Nallur* of Thirukkanappere Kurram constituted into the village of *Sundarathol-vilagam* for feeding the Brahmins in the Kulasekharan Mutt during certain festivals in Adi, Arpisi, Margali, (M. E. R. 279 of '30) and Chitra (M. E. R. 280 of '30). This Endowment was known as "*Madappura Irayili*". Provision for "Manjalkappu" and "Sandu" is made in M. E. R. 279 of '30.

(iv) Remission of taxes is found made on certain lands purchased for the purpose of digging a channel for growing red lilies. (M. E. R. 295 of '30).

(v) Do. for upkeep of the said channel' (M. E. R. 296, 298, and 299 of '30). The channel was called "*Thirumangai*" and was situate at the spring head at the Thalai Aruvi at the top of the Hills. This charity is styled as "*Thiru-odaippuram*".

(vi) Certain taxes on lands in *Solakulantaka Chaturvedi mangalam*, a Brahmadeya in Paganure-Kurram, are found

remitted for certain charities. This gift was at the instance of Queen Dharanimulududaiyar. The purpose of the gift is stated to be the upkeep of a Flower Garden founded by her near the spring at the top of the Hill. These were called "*Ramanujan Thiru-nandavanam*" and "*SengalanirThiruvodai*." The endowments are styled as "*Thiru-nandavanappuram*", and "*Thiruvodaippuram*" (M. E. R. 300 of '30).

(vii) Remission of taxes on certain other lands gifted at Solakulantaka — Chaturvedimangalam is also noticed. Purpose of the gift was to meet the expenses of the daily Thirumanjanam of the deity and for the morning offerings on the day of Uththiram in every month in the temple. The gift is at the instance of Queen Dharanimulududaiyar and is called "*Devadhana Iraiylili*" (M.E.R. 301 of '30). The dittams prescribed for the daily Thirumanjanam as (சந்தணக்காப்பு கழஞ்சும் கற்பூரம் நாலு மாலும் குங்குமம் இரண்டு மஞ்சாடியும் அகில் etc.) as well as that for the monthly Uththiram are interesting.

For Thiruvuthiram in the month the *dittam* was:

1	Paruppu for Thiruppanagam	1 Kuruni
2	Rice	1 Kuruni
3	Ghee	1 Nazhi
4	Ghee for Porikkari Amudhu	1 Alock
5	Kari-Amudhu	64 Palams
6	Sugar	1 Palam
7	Pepper	1 Ulakku
8	Jiragam (cumin)	$\frac{1}{2}$ Chevidu
9	Salt	(not clear)
10	Adaikkai Amudhu (Arecca nuts)	32
11	Ilai Amudhu (Betels)	1 Bundle.

(M. E. R. 301 of '30)

(viii) Remission of taxes on certain lands for the maintenance of flower garden and for growing red lilies for the temple and for a "*Thirunanda Vilakku*" are found in (M. E. R. 302 and 303 of '30).

(ix) The grant of the village of *Punarkulam* by the assembly of Parantaka Chaturvedimangalam in Ari Nadu and the remission of the taxes thereon are referred to in M. E. R. 22 and 23 of '32. The purpose of the grant was repairs to the temple undertaken by Ilaya-Villi-Dasar in the IIIrd Thirumuttam and the Thirumadhils thereat.

(j) (i) In (M. E. R. 275 of '30) the king is described as Kochchadayan Thribhuvana Chakravartin Kulasekhara Deva.

(ii) The unit of linear measurement during his reign was known as "*Veera Pandyan Kol*" and the unit of measure was "*Veera Pandyan*" (M. E. R. 275 of '30).

(iii) The extent of lands in areas of 'Velis' as in the Tanjore District is also mentioned in M. E. R. 279 of '30. "*Sri Vaishnavas*" and "*Nambu Seivars*" of Sri Paramaswami temple are referred to in M. E. R. 279 and 280 of '30.

(iv) Reference is made to the worship of "*Sri Palliyarai Nachiyar*" and endowments made for her worship in A. R. 276 of '30. The *Palliyarai Nachiyar Vighraha* is now missing and the worship stopped long since. Recently the Palliyarai worship has been revived owing to the munificence of one Sri Somasundaram Chettiar of Nattarasangottai.

After Jatavarman Kulasekhara I, his brother *Thribhuvana Chakravartin Maravarman Sundara Pandya* I, the younger of the two sons of Vikrama Pandya, succeeded. He reigned from 1216—1238 A. D. Jatavarman Kulasekhara II was co-regent with him in or about 1238. There are a number of inscriptions which belong to this monarch Jatavarman Kulasekhara II found in the Alagar Hills. Some of them are M. E. R. 282 and 288 of '30 and 11 of '32. Some of his inscriptions begin with the expression "*புலகுமரிய*" and some with "*திருமடந்தையன்*" (M. E. R. 282 of '30). He is also referred in the Thirupparankundram inscriptions. His ministers were Malavarayar, Raman alias Pallavarayar, Mantri of Perumanalure (M. E. R. 282 of '30).

He held his court at Madakkulam Palace. His conquests were also important. His conquest of the Chola country is referred to in M. E. R. 282 of '30. He is described as "One who was pleased to take the Chola country". In M. E. R. 282 of '30 he is also described as "Sonadu Kondan", and this was in the 5th year of his reign.

Some of his endowments are referred to below:—

(i) Remission of taxes on lands in Meliranyamuttam. The Endowment is referred to as "*Thiruvodaippuram*" for the up-keep of a channel dug by the Mantri of Perumanalure (M. E. R. 282 of '30).

(ii) Remission of taxes on 10 mahs (a measure prevalent in Tanjore District) of lands in *Raja Choodamani Chathurvedi Mangalam* in Ala Nadu is mentioned. The endowment was for the maintaining of eight perpetual lamps in the temple. The endowment was made by one Thiruvudayal a lady of the royal household (M. E. R. 288 of '30). The charity is called *Thiruvilakkuppuram*.

(iii) Remission of taxes on lands and endowed for the temple for the offerings of the God during the service called the "*Kurukulaththarayan sandi*". This was instituted in his own name by SIRRURUDAYAN Soran Uyyanindravadan alias Kurukulattarayan of Tadanganai SIRRUR in Thirumalli Nadu (M. E. R. 11 of '32).

Next to Maravarman Sundara Pandya I, *Maravarman Sundara Pandya II* ascended the throne on 13—7—1238 and reigned for a period of about 15 years till 1253 A. D. During this Monarch's reign the meddlesomeness of the Hoysalas of Mysore was very great through their military officers Varadanna Dandanayaka and Appanna Dandanayaka. Reference to this monarch is made in the following inscriptions at Alagar Hills (M. E. R. 277, 278, 289, 291, 292, 304, 305, 308 of '30 & 9, 17, 18, 19 and 24 of '32.)

His inscriptions generally begin with the expressions "மாமாதிசுவராயம்", "ஐயமடச்சுவராயம்" and "நெருசெய்யமடச்சுவராயம்" (M.E.R. 277, 278, 289, 291, 304 of '30 and 9 & 17 of '32). One of his Ministers was a certain Malavarayan. His capital was at Madakkulam. His throne was called "Malavarayan" (M.E.R. 291 & 304 of '30.) The names of some of his relatives are referred to in M. E. R. 291 of '30 as "*Mamadi*" and this is probably the Hoysala King Vira Someswara Deva. In another inscription M. E. R. 24 of '32 a Vikramachola Deva is referred to as the king's brother-in-law.

His sway is stated to have extended to the countries of Hoysalas, Pundras, Kalingas, Ilam, Kadaram, Gaudam, Telingana, Sonagam, Chinam, Thuluvam, Guhiram (Kadiram) Kurjaram, Posalam, Bobbalam, Magadam (M. E. R. 277 of '30, 291, 304 and 278).

The endowments referred to in the inscriptions connected with this Monarch are the following :—

(i) Remission of taxes on lands and grant of land as "*Madappuram*". Purpose of the endowment was the feeding of the "*Tridandi Sanyasins*" and "*Ekaki Sri Vaishnavas*" and "*Vidhyarthi*" and visitors in the *Thirunadudayan Mutt* in the temple. (M. E. R. 277 and 278 of '30). This Mutt was founded by *Arayan* Thiru Nadudayan alias Nila Ganga Arayan.

(ii) Remission of taxes on some villages and of the Padi-kaval on Sadakkudi as *devadana* in favour of the temple was made for the purpose of providing for certain offerings etc during the "*Sundara Pandyan Sandi*" instituted in the name of the King (M. E. R. 289 of '30).

(iii) Remission of taxes on the village of Thirukkottiyure in Kerala Singa Valanadu was made for meeting the expenses of certain offerings and other expenses during the service called "*Posala Veera Somidevan Sandi*" instituted in the temple in the name of the Hoysala King (M. E. R. 291 of '30).

(iv) Remission of taxes on *Sirudhure* in Sola Pandya Valanadu was for meeting the expenses connected with the "*Akalanka Nadalwar Sandi*". This service was instituted by Akalanka Nadalwan (M. E. R. 304 & 305 of '30).

(v) Remission of taxes on certain lands in *Padirikkudi* in Then Parappu Nadu and the grant of the land by Kannada Deva in the name of his younger brother Hoysala Deva were for the supply of flower garlands to the temple. (M. E. R. 308 of '30). The charity was named "*Thirumalaippuram*".

(vi) Remission of taxes on lands granted as Devadana in *Vanavan Mahadevi Chaturvedhimangalam* in Vembu Nadu was for meeting the expenses of offerings to the Lord on the day of Sadayam in the month of Mina, being the natal star day of the King's elder brother Annalvi Chokkanadhar (M. E. R. 9 of '32).

(vii) Remission of taxes on *Marudhure* in Then Parappu Nadu was granted for the maintenance of the "*Sundara Pandyan Nandavanam*" and for provision of lights during processional days. (M. E. R. 17 of '30).

(viii) Remission of taxes on certain lands was also granted for meeting the expenses of a "*Thiruvodaithirunandavanappuram*" which was instituted by Kulasekharaperumal Dasan in the name of Araiyan Thirunadudayan alias Nilaganga Araiyan of Kilaikodumalur alias Madhurodayanallur in Vadathali Sembi Nadu.

(ix) Remission of taxes on the villages of *Irappaikulam* and *Vadamuri* was made for certain charities in the Temple Chaturvedhimangalam of Ari Nadu. The grant was made by the assembly (Mahasabhai) of Parantaka. The village of Irappaikulam was popularly called *Sangathazhaganallur* named after our Lord Alagar one of whose popular names was "*Sangathazhagan*".

Other important items referred to in the inscriptions are the following :—

Inscription M. E. R. 292 of '30 during this monarch's reign refers to the Hoysala King *Nissanka Pratapa Chakravarthi Vira Someswara*. The Hoysala is referred to as "*Samastha Bhuvanasraya*". This inscription has reference to the contents of M. E. R. 291 of '30. Inscription M. E. R. 308 of '30 also refers to Hoysala Deva. A number of Birudas of the Hoysala King are found in M. E. R. 292 of '30. A portion of which runs thus: "भुवनाश्रय श्री पृथ्वी बल्लभ महाराजाधिराज परमेश्वर द्वा (धा) रापति पुरवराधीश्वर यादवकुलाधीश्वर सर्वज्ञ चूडामणि मलराज राज-मलवरुलु गण्डकदन प्रचण्डगण्ड मेरुण्डने काङ्गवीरण सहायशूरशनिपार-सिद्धि निर्मूलन पाण्ड्यकुल समुद्धरण चोलरा निस्संगप्रताप-चक्रवर्ति पोशल श्री वीरसोमेश्वर देवर....." etc. (some of the letters are lost and some indistinct). Fixing of "*Thiru Azhikkallu*" is referred to in M. E. R. 308 of '30.

The next king was Maravarman Thribhuvana Chakravarthin *Vikrama Pandya Deva*. He appears to have reigned between 1249-1255 A. D. Probably he was a *co-regent* for some time.

Inscription M. E. R. 25 & 27 of '32 belongs to this monarch's reign. There is another inscription of *Vikrama Pandya* M. E. R. 297 of '30 which was in the 2nd year of his reign. Inscriptions M. E. R. 25, 26 and 27 of '30 run up to his 5th and 6th regnal years.

In one of his inscriptions we find the expression "*திருமலை ஐயலகல்*" (M. E. R. 297 of '30).

The next King after *Vikrama Pandya* was *Thribhuvana Chakravarthin Sri Veera Pandya Deva* (1253-1260 A. D.)

Inscription M. E. R. 27 of '32 refers to his regnal year 5. From a perusal of M. E. R. 25 to 27 of '32 he seems to have been the immediate successor of *Vikrama Pandya*.

Reference to *Veera Pandya Chakravarthi* and his "*Aduk-kalaipuram*" grant to *Ramanuja* is mentioned in M. E. R. 325 of '30.

Endowments made during his reign were the following:—

The Endowment in M. E. R. 297 of '30 was in cash. The amount was 3 "Anai Achchu" and 24 "pazham-kasu" which was equal to 8 "Anai Achchu". It was directed in this inscription that this amount was to be under investment with the Kanakkan and Bandari in charge of the Sri Bandaram of this temple, and out of the interests accruing from which certain lamps were to be lit up in the temple with one Ulakku of Ghee by the measure called "Solai-Piran" (M. E. R. 297 of '30.)

The tenure *Karanmai* is referred to in M.E.R. 25 of '32. The servant's name is mentioned as Kannan Narayanan of Kalanikkarai in Malai Mandalam. The varieties of taxes etc. that prevailed during the period, and references to "Thiru Azhikkallu" and "Achchu-kasu" are also all made in M. E. R. 25 of '32. "*Ilanjinaikkallu*" is referred to in M. E. R. 26 of '32.

A very interesting feature of this and various other inscriptions is that whenever the grant is by some assembly of some village etc. stanzas similar to the following appear at the beginning of such inscriptions:—

வாஸிபுரீ [...] வந்தது மாவடுதா மாவடுத
வாஸிபுரீ வந்தது மாவடுதா மாவடுத
வாஸிபுரீ வந்தது மாவடுதா மாவடுத
வாஸிபுரீ வந்தது மாவடுதா மாவடுத
வாஸிபுரீ வந்தது மாவடுதா மாவடுத

(M. E. R. 26 of '30)

Another noteworthy feature in this and various other inscriptions is the description of the person to whom and the place, time and made along with other details; The following example will be instructive on this point. After citing the Mangala sloka. Inscription M. E. R. 26 and 27 of '32 proceeds thus:—

“மலைமண்டலத்து கழனிக்கரை கண்ணன் கரையணற்கு, ஆனி அளிழ்த்துக்கு அதியழகியான் மண்டபத்து, தியாகன் சிறியான் பந்தர்சிங், கோயில் அலங்காரன் பீடத்து இருந்து, சடகோபன் பாட்டு கோளாற்றி, அரி பாட்டு பிரம்மதேயம் சூரீ பரானந்த சதுர்வேதி மங்கலத்து சபையார்” —etc.

M. E. R. 26 and 27 of '32 also refers to '*Pannir Adi-Kol*' and other linear measurements. The terms "*Chei*", and the coin "*achchu*" are also referred to. The *varam* rates in kind for Nanja, Punja, Kurunchi, Naththam, gardens, tanks, tank beds and for the lands that are channel-irrigated and lift-irrigated for the various kinds of crops, whether for paddy or other miscellaneous grains are all dealt with in detail. The noting of the favourable scales of *Varam* also is significant.

Jatavarman Sundara Pandya Deva I.

This monarch ascended the throne on 20—4—1251, and reigned over the kingdom till 1270. A. D. He was one of the greatest of the Pandyan emperors and during his time the Pandyan Empire reached its height of glory and splendour. The extent of the Empire also was at its greatest during his reign.

Jatavarman Nayanar Veera Pandya and Annalvi Kulasekhara are supposed to have been his co-regents. Inscriptions M. E. R. 84 of 29 and 320 and 321 of '30 in this temple refer to this Emperor.

The Birudas of this Emperor inscribed in Grantha in M. E. R. 84 of 29 are noted below:—

1. स्वस्तिश्री समस्त जगदाधार सोमकुलतिलक मधुरापुरि माधव केरलवंश निर्मूलन लङ्काद्वीपलुण्ठनद्वितीयराम ।
2. चोलकुलशैल कुलिश कर्णागराज विद्राणकागवकरिकूग पाकल विविध रिपु दुर्गमर्दन विरगण्ड गोपालविपिनदा ।
3. वदहन काञ्चीपुर वराधीश्वर गणपति हरिणशार्दूलनेलूर पुर विरचित वीराभिषेक प्रणतराजप्रतिष्ठापक ।
4. महाराज राज परमेश्वर त्रिभुवन चक्रवर्ति श्रीसुन्दरपाण्ड्यदेव etc.

From the above we find he was called:— 1. "Samastha Jagadhadhara" 2. "Somakula Thilaka" 3. "Madhurapuri Madhava" 4. "Kerala Vamsa Nirmulana" 5. "Lanka Dwipa Lundana" 6. "Dvitiya Rama" 7. "Chola Kula Saila Kulisa" 8. "Karnaga Raja Chidrana" 9. "Kagava Kari Kuga Pakala" 10. "Vividha Ripu Durga Mardhana" 11. "Vira Ganda Gopala Vipina Dava Dahana" 12. "Kanchipura Varadhiswara" 13. "Ganapathi Harina Sardhula" 14. "Nellura Pura Virachita Veera Abhisheka" 15. "Pranatha Raja Prathishtapaka" 16. "Maharaja Raja Parameswara Thribhuvana Chakravarthi Sri Sundra Pandya Deva."

Among his other titles were the following:— 1. "Emman-dalamum - Kondaruliya" 2. "Maharajadhiraja" 3. "Hema Achchadana Maharaja" 4. "Maragata - Prithvi - brit" 5. "Raja Surya" 6. "Raja Tapan" 7. "Kshiti Pati Ravi" 8. "Ellam Thalaivan" 9. "Kodanda - Raman." and 10. "Kovil Pon-Meynda Perumal"

It is found from the above and from M. E. R. 332, 340 and 361 of '31 that this Emperor brought the whole of South India including Cuddappa and Nellore, under his sway. He captured the Chola country and regranted the same to the Chola Monarch. He punished the Hoysalas and annexed the Kongu country. Kanchi appears to have been his second capital. Ceylon too was firmly held down. The Keralas were made vassals and tributaries. He conquered the Kadava chieftain Kopperunjinga. The Magadai country (Salem and South Arcot) also came under his conquests. Soon after the conquest of the Magadhai, Coimbatore also fell to him. He killed the Telugu Chola ruler Ganda Gopala in battle. The defeat of the Kakatiya King Ganapathi soon followed his campaign against the Telingas and their defeat in the battle at Mudugure. It is stated that he drove the Bana Chieftains into the forest and the Aryas to Peraru. His victories at Kannanure, Koppam and Sendamangalam are stated to be outstanding ones.

His Thulabharams at Srirangam and Chidambaram and his Veerabhishekams at Nellure and Srirangam were celebrated ones.

His endowments were liberal and magnificent. He was generous and tolerant to all religions and sects. Temples of Sri Vishnu, Sri Siva, or Pallies of Sri Buddha or Sri Mahavira equally benefitted at his hands.

It was he that covered the roofs of the temples of Srirangam, Sri Chidambaram and Sri Thirumalirunjolai with Gold plates and earned the unique title of "*Hema Achchadana Maharaja*". Inscription M. E. R. 320 and 321 of '30 refer to the remission of taxes on the lands in Siruvellarai. "*Chedirayan Peetam*", "*Kulasekharan Pandal*", and "*Sundara Pandyan Mandapam*", where the God was seated and the recitation of "*Sadagopan Pattu*", when the Grant was made are mentioned. The festival of "*Kaisikotsavam*" in the Karthigai month is also referred to. The grant is called "*Archchanabaga-Irayili*".

Maravarman Kulasekhara I was the next Emperor who ascended the throne in 1268 and reigned till 10-6-1311. It was during his reign in A. D. 1290 Hazrat Sultan Ali Uddin Sahib invaded Madura. The name of the Kazimar Street of Madura City is attributed to Kazi Syed Tajuddin Sahib, a follower of Hazrat Sultan.

Kulasekhara's co-regents were:—

1. Maravarman Vikrama Pandya 1283—1296 A. D.
2. Jatavarman Sundra Pandya II 1276—1293 A. D.
3. Jatavarman Sundara Pandya III 1303—1319 A. D.
(Legitimate son of the Emperor and also known as Kodandaraman.)
4. Jatavarman Veera Pandya II 1296 A.D. (Illegitimate son of the Emperor).

This Emperor led an expedition against Parakrama Bahu of Ceylon in 1284 A. D. and vanquished that King. Among his feudatories were Mahabali Vanadhirayar. He reigned from his capital at Viradavalam in Urasure Kurrum a sub-division of Tenkarai Raja Gambira Valanadu and Jayankonda Solapuram. His thrones were called "*Kalingarayan*" and "*Kachchikuvachchan*". Among his many Birudas the more important are "*Cheranai Venra*", "*Kollam-Konda*", and "*Buvanaika-Vira*" (M. E. R. 318 and 319 of '30). Among the endowments of his period the chief one was the grant of certain lands in five villages purchased and separated from the Nadu, made tax free, and granted in 222 shares to 216 Brahmins of Kulasekhar Chaturvedhimangalam to the temple of Alwar set up here and as Vritti for these Brahmins. Reference to the "*24 feet Sundara Pandyan Kol*" and the area of a '*Mah*' as being comprised of 256 kulis and the measure called "*Veera Pandyan Kol*" are made. (M. E. R. 318, 319 of '30). M. E. R. 323 of '30 refers to a tax free gift of a "*Thiruppanippuram*" of the village of Perungarunai Chaturvedhimangalam a Brahmadeya in Sundara Pandya Valanadu. The grant was made to one Alagar Thirusirukkar an Ekaki Sri Vaishnava of the temple. The item of Thiruppani was the construction of the "*Kodandaraman Thirumadhil*". "*Kodandaraman*" is supposed to be one of the names of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya III. At the close of the reign of the Emperor his two sons the legitimate Sundara Pandya and the illegitimate Veera Pandya both fought for the throne. A fratricidal war took place in 1310 between them which was an easy invitation and opportunity for Malik Kafur to pounce upon enfeebled Madura and capture the Pandyan Kingdom. For the vassal Rama Varman Kulasekhara the Chera King of Travancore also, it was an occasion to regain his independence and capture portions of the Pandyan Kingdom.

Jatavarman Sundara Pandya III. (1310—1315) A. D.
It was during these co-regents' reign that Marco Polo visited the

Pandya Nad. His travels refer to Kayal near Korkhi on the Thambraparni. He describes the Pandya country as extending from Quilon to Nellure and calls it "the greater India", "the finest and noblest province in the world" and so on. He refers to the then Pandyan Emperor as "*Sunder Bendi*". Chinese chronicles speak of an ambassador of this Pandyan emperor to Kublaikhan the Mongol Emperor. Contemporary Persian historian Wassaf says that all the splendour of the west came from the Pandyan Kingdom which was so situated as to be the "key of the Hind".

Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya I. (1315–1324 A. D.): It was during this Parakrama's reign Malik Naib Kafur (Athi Sultan Malik Naib of Farishta) that Madura was invaded in 1324, and the shameful crime of the destruction of Madura Fort, City, and Temple was perpetrated. The whole city was razed to the ground under the orders of Kafur except the sanctum sanctorum of Sri Meenakshi Sundareswaral shrine at the time.

After Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya, *Sundara Pandya Deva* (1324–1342 A. D.), *Jatavarman Veera Pandya* (1342 A. D.) and *Parakrama Pandya* (1342–1365 A. D.) seem to have held some sort of sovereignty over certain portions of the Pandya Nad, though at Madura proper the sway of the Moslems was complete.

The controversies over the identity and age of the "Sundara Pandyas": Consequent upon the mention of a large number of Sundara Pandyas, serious controversy prevails as to Kun (Sundara) Pandya's date. Wilson would have it as 1028 A. D. Taylor would have it as 1320 B. C. and Nelson would satirically demonstrate it to be 3119 B. C. on the ground that since Kun Pandya was made Sundara Pandya by Gnana Sambandha, and since Nelson's contemporary Peetadhipathi at the Madura Gnanasambandha Mutt was the 277th Matathipathi, and since if a Matathipathi's regime could be fixed at an average period of 18 years for each of the 277 Matathipathis,

it would work out to 3119 B. C. From Raja Ratnacari (Upham Vol. II Page 8) we see that Gnana Sambandha went to Ceylon and preached Saivism in the 1362nd year after Buddha's death. This gives us the year of Gnana Sambandha as 819 A. D. Sundara Pandya's wife is stated to be Vanitheswari or Mangayarkarasi daughter of Karikala. It is stated that it was this Karikala [Kuloththunga I had another name as Karikala] who persecuted Sri Ramanuja. If so, this would throw some light on Ramanuja's age also as well as that of his Royal disciple Peddata Hoysala or Vishnu Vardhana. Nelson's theory that the "Sunder Bendi" of Marco Polo (1288-1293 A.D.) could be Gnana Sambandha's contemporary Sundara Pandya is not convincing, since the date of Marco Polo is stated to be the end of 13th century. But Marco Polo's contemporary Sundara Pandya (Sunder Bendi) may be someone of the many Sundara Pandyas that graced the throne of Madura and possibly Jatavarman Sundara Pandya III.

Though innumerable were the monarchs of the Pandyan Dynasty, for they trace their descent from the Solar and Lunar dynasties and their names and kingdoms find references in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, scholars have been able to fix up in their research 72 Pandyan monarchs of the 1st Series, ending with the name of Kubja (Kun) or Sundara Pandya. According to Wilson after these 72 Monarchs, one series of 12 Pandyas beginning with Somasundara reigned and then another series of 14 monarchs began with Chandrakulā Deepa. But Nelson's researches reveal after these original 72 monarchs 41 Pandyas who reigned as per the list given by him, the last of whom is stated to be Parakrama Pandya who was conquered by the Moslems.

However doubtful may be the ascertainment of the names of the Pandyas and their period of sovereignty before 1173 A.D. the date of the accession of Veera Pandya, it may be supposed that we are on firmer ground from Veera Pandya's regime onwards.

Moslem Rulers of Madura.

After the driving away by Malik Kafur of the Pandya King Parakrama from Madura, seven Moslem rulers for 48 years ruled over the Madura country. They were:—

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Malik Kafur the invader | 1324—1327 A. D. |
| 2. Alla Udin Khan
(Jalal Uddin Asan Shah) | 1327—1333 A. D. |
| 3. Utham Udin Khan | 1333—1336 A. D. |
| 4. Kutbuddin | 1336—1341 A. D. |
| 5. Makkal Uddin | 1341—1348 A. D. |
| 6. Savada Malik & Ahed Malik | 1348—1360 |
| 7. Fendak Malik | 1360—1372 A. D. |

This period of 48 years was a reign of terror and practical anarchy under these eight chiefs.

Intervention of Vijayanagar—Vijayanagar Viceroys at Madura.

Bukka Rayar of Vijayanagar took pity at the devastated and deplorable condition of the Pandya country and sent his general the famous Kumara Kampanna Udayar in 1371 A. D. to the Pandya Nad. Deliverence from the existing thralldom of this country was soon effected by this general in 1372 A.D. And when on the day of deliverence, the temple of Sri Meenakshi was opened and which was kept closed all along since 1324 A. D. the priests having all fled the country, it was found that the Pooja flowers offered to the Deity 48 years ago were as fresh as if the pooja was done but the previous day.

From 1372–1404 A. D. or for 32 years Kampanna Udayar and his successors Embanna and Prakasa governed the country; and then from 1404 to 1451 A. D. Lakshmana Naicken and Narasu Naicken & Mathanna Naicken servants of Vijayanagar, ruled the country for 47 years.

Re-instatement of the Pandyan descendants on the Madura throne by Vijayanagar,

In 1451 A.D. the then Viceory of Vijayanagar (Lakkana) under the orders of Vijayanagar installed on the throne of Madura, the descendants of the last Pandya line. There were 4 rulers in that line viz., Sundara Thol Maha Vilvinatha Rayar or Mahabali Vanadha Rayar son of Mahabali Bana who embraced the Prabandic Vaishnavism as taught by Sri Manavalamamuni (M. E. R. 307 of '30 and 85/29 and 1 & 12 of '32) Kalayar Somanar, Anjatha Perumal and Mutharasa Thirumalai Mahabali Vanatharayar. Some opine that in the basin of the Palar there were certain Bana Chieftains with the title of Mayali Vanatharayar and that some of them were transferred to Madura during the reign of Kuloththunga III (1261 to 1272 A. D.) and were exercising some sort of sovereignty in certain portions of the Pandya Nad even during the reign of the Moslems from 1324—1372 A. D. These Banas reigned from 1451 to 1499 A. D. The greatest monarch in this line as noticed in the inscription (M.E.R. 307 of '30) was Thirumalirunjolai Ninran Mahabali Vanatha Rayan Uranga Villi Dasan. To him Thirumalirunjolai owes many of its proud possessions, endowments and improvements. It was this dynasty that is stated to have constructed the present big Gopurams of Sri Meenakshi Temple also at Madura 1451—1499 A. D. The Biruda of this monarch "Thirumalirunjolai Ninran" is significant and make us infer that he might have had his capital and court at Thirumalirunjolai itself which event might have given him this title.

Mahabali Banadiraja.

There are only 2 inscriptions of this Monarch in this temple Viz. M. E. R. 307 of '30 and 85 of '29. M. E. R. 307 is found on the south wall (Inside the Aryan Mandapam). The particulars as regards the year of the inscription is stated to be as follows:— 'Saka' 1386 - Dharana year - Mesha masa - Poorva paksha - Sapthami - Sukravara - Punarpoosa nakshatra - (A.D. 1460).

This inscription refers to a tax-free gift of the village of *Kulaman-gulam* in Meliranyamuttam in perpetuity for one Thiruvanan Somayaji who to the utmost satisfaction of the Lord and his monarch Thirumalirunjolai-Nindran Mavali-Vanadharayan-uranga-villi-dasan had completed the renovation of the temple from the (உபரணம்) upana to the (ஸ்தூபி) stooپی. This gift is purported to have been made by the Lord himself when he was seated in the Sundarapandyan Mandapam in the Kulasekharan Pandal in the presence of the God and Goddess and certain others namely 'Kudavar' — 'Kovanavar' — 'Poo iduvar' — 'Thalai iduvar' — 'Anukkar' — 'Kanakkar' and others, evidently the sibbandhis of the Devasthanam. M.E.R. 85-29 found on the base of the western wall of the Sri Thayar shrine states that the length of the space therein marked and specified by a particular line indicates the standard linear measure that went by the name of 'திருமாலிருஞ்சோலை சின்னான் மாவலிவானாதிராயன் மாத்திராக்குலம்' (Thirumalirunjolainindran Mavali Vanadharayan Mathrangulam). There is another Mavali Vanadha Rayar referred to in another inscription at Sri Alagar Hills, i. e., M. E. R. 12/32. The latter bears the date:

"Saka " 1528-Parabhava-Dakshinayana-Hemantharitu-Dhanurmasa-Aparapaksha Saphthami-Guruvasaram-Uttirakshatra-Soubagya-and.....karana (A. D. 1606).

This refers to the fact that the Appanthiruppathy temple was constructed and the deities therein installed by Rengayyan-gar son of Rappoola Appayyan-gar. The deity there is known by the name of 'Thiruvengadamudayan.' Appanthiruppathy was also called as Sri Alagar's 'Therkuveedu' (தெற்குவீடு). The gift purports to be of the village of *Pannaippacheri* by Mavali-vanadharayar. The object of the gift is 'worship of Thiruvengadamudayan' and 'repairs to this temple'. It is stated therein that the property should be managed by the Trustees of Sri Alagar Hills, and its income should be remitted into the treasury of the Lord Sri Alagar and the expenses of the temple of Appanthiruppathy to be met from the Alagar temple. We do not know

what have become of those endowments nor is this temple now under this Devastanam. The usual injunction against the transgressor of the charity to merit the sins of murdering his own father and mother and the murder of "Karampasu" on the banks of the Ganges, is ofcourse still in this inscription, commencing with the stanza " Dhana palana—etc".

The Bana Pandyas.

These "Bana-Pandyas" or as Nelson and others would have it the "Vilvinatha" dynasty having become extinct, the sovereignty of the country was again directly assumed by Vijayanagar through her Viceroys in or about 1500 A. D. The first Viceroy after this Vilvinatha dynasty was Narasu Naicker. The Viceroys of Vijayanagar though they were at first 'Viceroys' in the real sense of the term, obedient and faithful subordinates to the throne of Vijayanagar, after the battle of Thalikkotta in 1565 A. D. effective control over these Viceroys having been lost, they became practically independent sovereigns from that period.

Emperors of Vijayanagar:

Since almost every sovereign of Vijayanagar or Vidhyanagara, almost from its foundation in 1335 A. D. and beginning from the reign of Harihara I (1335—1355) was directly administering the Fort, City and Temple at Thirumalirunjolamalai through his Viceroy or king of the Nayak dynasty of Madura, as may be seen from the wealth of the inscriptions in the Temple and which will be noticed in their appropriate places, a mention of some of these personages would no doubt be appropriate and is hence noted below:—

The 1st or the Sangama Dynasty:

The following Emperors graced the House of Vijayanagar since the founding of Vijayanagar at Hampi in 1335 A. D. Harihara I 1336—1355 A. D., Bukka I 1355—1377 A. D. (Brother of Harihara and contemporary of Sayana), Harihara II (daughter's son of Bukka I) 1377—1404 A. D., Bukka II (son)

1404—1406 A. D., Devaraya I 1406—1422 A. D., Vira Vijaya 1422 A. D., Prauda Devaraya II 1422—1449 A. D., (Nicola Conti's visit.), Mallikarjun 1449—1465 A.D., Virupaksha (brother of Mallikarjuna) & Prauda Deva Raya. 1465—1485 A. D.

The IInd or the Saluva Dynasty.

The next two sovereigns were of the Saluva Dynasty, founded by Saluva Mangu and Gopan Arya ruler and minister respectively of Narayanavaram. They were Narasinga Saluvan (acc. 1486 A.D.) whose minister was the famous Saluva Thimma or Appaji and Immadi Narasayya (acc. 1492 A. D.)

The IIIrd or The Thuluva Dynasty.

Then came Narasa Rayalu of the Thuluva Dynasty whose minister was also the famous Saluva Thimma Raja or Appaji. By his first wife Dipamba Devi he had Veera Narasimha Rayalu (1497—1509 A. D.), and by the second wife Nagambika Devi he had the great Krishna Deva Rayalu 4—2—1509 to 19—11—1531) and by the third wife Umambika Devi he had Achyutha Deva Rayalu (15—8—1530 to 25—1—1541 A. D.) and who all successively were reigning as emperors of Vijayanar, and Rayar Appaji continuing as Minister in all these four reigns. The arrivals of Vasco de Gama in 1498 A. D., the Marquess of Almeyda's embassy and the Italian traveller Varthoma all took place during the reign of Vira Narasimha Rayalu.

Of the Vijayanagar Emperors that were most prominently connected with this Devasthanam, we find from the inscriptions that, Krishnadevaraja (1509—1531 A. D.) Achyuthadeva Maharaja (1531—1542 A. D.) Sadasiva Maharaja (1542—1570 A. D.) Rama Raja Thirumalaideva Maharaja, (1546—1565 A. D.) and Veera Venkatadeva Maharaja (1566—1589 A. D.) have all taken a very prominent part.

Of course, among the Vijayanagar Viceroys and the Nayak Kings, there have been many who have been devout and munificent in their services to the Lord of this temple, but the

Natham, Padugai, Tope, Thuravu, Kudigal and other 'Samasthaprapthi' with the Nidhi, Nikshepa, Jala, Pashana, Yakchini, Agami, Siddha, or the 'Ashta Boga Dasa Swamiyam'. The gift was made through Immadi Veerayya Dandeswara on behalf of the Emperor. The offering to the Lord is stated to consist of three kalams of rice per diem with 18 varieties of preparations with five kinds of vegetable preparations, besides, 5 kinds of 'Thiruppaniyarams' etc. Quantities of sandal and cocoanuts, betel nuts, camphor, garlands of ordinary flowers etc. are all specified. The gift is stated to have been entered both on Copper plate and stones and ends with the usual references to 'Dana Palana Yor Madhye etc.'

Krishna Deva Raya is stated to have made a brother of his, Thirumalai Raja, Chief Justice of the realm and appointed Venkatadhri, another brother of his, the Generalissimo of the Empire.

Appayya Dikshitar, Vedanta Desika and Sambasiva Chariyar were some of the 8 gems that adorned Krishna Deva Raya's court. It was Krishna Deva Raya who was the first to introduce the Ryotwari system in his empire. Many a famous temple at Hampi owe their origin to this great Emperor. His benefactions to various temples were numerous and limitless. Krishna Deva Raya's pilgrimage to Sri Alagar Hills and his having stayed there for 3 days is referred to in the *Raya Vachakamu*. Even the Italian traveller Barbosa and the merchant, writer and traveller Damengoe Poes speak to his many munificent gifts to the temples of Srirengam, Thiruppathi etc., and to the greatness of his empire. It was during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya that Vijayanagar was in its height of glory.

The next monarch connected with this temple is Achyutha Deva Maharaja (1531—1541) A. D. The inscriptions connected with this Emperor are M. E. R. 88 of '29, 330 of '30 and, 30 of '32. M. E. R. 88 of '29 is an inscription on the northern

wall of the Padinettambadi Gopuram. It has the following in its colophon

दानपालनयोर्मध्ये दानाश्चेत्योऽनुपालनम् ।
दानात्स्वर्गमवाप्नोति पालनादच्युतं पदम् ॥
स्वदत्ताद्विगुणं पुण्यं परदत्तानुपालनम् ।
परदत्तापहारेण स्वदत्तं निष्फलं भवेत् ॥

The inscription bears the following particulars as regards its date: —

Saka 1454—Nandana—Uttarayana—Saradritu—Meena Ravi—Poorvapaksha—Prathama—Budhavarā—Aswathi—Vishkambha yoga—Simha-karna—Yugadi-Punyakalam (A. D. 1532)

The Birudas of this Emperor were:—“Pandi Mandala Sthapanacharian”, “Sozhamandala Prathishtacharian”, “Poorva Dakshina Paschima Uttara Samudra adhipathi”, “The conqueror of Ilam”, “Emmandalamum Thirai Kondan” (எம்மண்டலம் திரை கண்டனன்), “Sreeveera-pratapa Srivira”, etc.

This pious gift is made on the *yugadi* Punyakalam. The author of the gift is referred to as Visvanatha Nayak son of Nagama Nayak, *oozhiyam* of Achyutha Deva Maharaja. The gift is referred to as ‘Thiruvidayattam’ and made ‘Sahiranya Udhaka Dhara Poorvakamaha’ to Lord Sri Alagar. The endowed property was the village of *Adanjiyure* situate in Kunraththure Sirmai on the northern banks of the River Vaigai. Other details are the same as in those of the endowment made during the time of Krishna Deva Maharaja. But the reference to the injunction “Dhana Palana-Yore-Madhye” is fuller. M. E. R. 330 of 30 on the right wall of the Tondaman Gopuram inscribed during the reign of this Emperor bears the following particulars as regards its date:—Saka 1464 — Subakrithu—Uttarayana—Grishmaritu—Mithunamasa—26th date—Poorvapaksha—Prathama—Ekadasi—Punyakala—Sukravara—Sathyayoga—Simha-karana—Anuratha nakshatra

(A. D. 1542). Certain cash endowments are referred to in it as follows :—

Out of the 1200 Pons which is the tax due to the Government the same is assigned to Lord Sri Alagar's treasury. Out of which 500 Pons are to be deemed as Achyutha Deva Maharaja's Dharmam, 400 Pons are to be deemed as Queen Varadarajamma's Dharmam, and 300 Pons are to be deemed as Prince Chikka Deva Maharaja's Dharmam. This charity is made through Varanasi Varadappa Annarayyan. The details of the offerings are all elaborated. The Nirmalya Neivedyam is directed to be given to the Sri Vaishnavas. The threat and injunction that he who transgresses this charity merits the sin of killing the "Karampasu" on the banks of the Ganges etc., etc. stand of course in the inscriptions.

The Italian traveller Ferno Nuniz visited Vijayanagar during this reign and is stated to have given a very vivid description of the Empire and its emperor. It was during the reign of Achyutha Deva Maharaja that Marshal Nagama Nayak was sent to Madura to help Chandra Sekhara Pandya against the aggression of Vira Sekhara Chola's invasion when Nagama proved traitorous to the throne of Vijayanagar.

After Achyutha his son *Venkata I or Venkatadhri* came to the throne (1542 A. D.) and being but a boy was an Emperor only in name and that for a period of six months only. His uncle is stated to have murdered the boy, mismanaged the Government and finally committed suicide.

The next Vijayanagar Imperial Donor was *Sadasiva Deva Maharaja 1541—1590 A. D.* He was the son of Renga deceased brother of Achyuta by the same mother. He was merely a puppet in the hands of the three brothers Rama Raja, Thirumalai Raja and Venkatadhri. Rama Raja and Thirumalai had married the daughters of Krishna Deva Maharaja and were hence very powerful. The brothers were actually ruling the

realm among themselves, Sadasiva being but a nominal sovereign. It was this Rama Raja that was defeated and slain in the battle of Tallikotta on 23—1—1565. The inscriptions of the temple that refer to this Monarch are M. E. R. 86/29 and 237 and 328 of 1930. M. E. R. 86/29 is found on the northern wall of the Padinettambadi Gopuram and bears the following particulars as regards its date.

Saka 1466—Kurothi—Uttarayana—Sasiraritu—Kumbha masa—Poorvapaksha Ekadasi—Adhityavara—Poosa nakshatra—Sobana yoga—Palava karana (A. D. 1544). The inscription refers to a gift of certain properties in *Nalukottai Sirmai* in Kalavelvinadu by one Peddarasa son of Arikala Periammarasa of Udhdhagiri and belonging to Kasyapa Gotra and Apasthamba Sutra. The endowment is made for Peddarasa's mother Basavamma. The offerings to Sri Lord Alagar are detailed as "Sengazhunir Thirumalai", (செங்கழுநீர் திருமலை) "Thiruppaniyaram" (திருப்பணியாரம்) "Suhiyan" (சுஹியன்) and other rice preparations. The injunction against the transgressor of the charity to merit the sin of having killed his own Guru in addition to others is mentioned herein. M. E. R. 327 and 328 of '30 also refer to the endowment of Peddarasu above mentioned and appears to be in acknowledgment of Peddarasu's gift and an undertaking by the temple authorities to carefully execute the trust. Inscription mentions the measure called "Solaipiran". Reference to the Thirumanjana Theertham of the Lord Sri Alagar having been brought from the Thalai Aruvi or the "Spring Head" is also found herein.

The next Emperor in this line whose name is associated with the temple is *Rama Raja Thirumalai Deva Maharaja*. M. E. R. No. 1-29 and 30 of 1932 and M. E. R. No. 93-29 found in this temple refer to this Emperor. Of these inscriptions M. E. R. 93 is most important from a historical point of view. This inscription is found on the Eastern wall of the ruined Royal gopuram. The inscription begins thus:—

49

शुभमस्तु.

श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः ।

श्रीरङ्गाचार्य गुरवे नमः ।

एतत्सौन्दरराजस्य विष्णोर्वेद सहोदरम् ।

सुसुरशिरश्चूडारत्न सञ्चारि शासनम् ।

स्वस्तिश्री विजयाभ्युदय कल्यब्द

हरेर्लीलावराहस्य दंष्ट्रादण्डस्सपातुवः ।

हेमाद्रिकलशा यत्र घात्री चन्द्रश्रियन्दधौ ॥

... .. प्रमेय एव विष्णोर्नाभीकमल संभवात् ।

पुरूरवानाम तस्यायुर्नहुषोस्य etc.

The inscription is mutilated and indistinct and a perusal of the same reveals many errors also.

The date of the inscription as found therein, is as follows:-
'Kali' 4497—'Saka' 1468—Parabhava—Purattasi—Pournima—
Guruvara (A. D. 1546).

The inscription is both in Grantha and Tamil and gives the geneology of the Kings of the Aravidu Dynasty. The purport of the inscription as stated therein is the inscribing of Sriman Maha Mandaleswara Rama Raja Thirumalai Deva Maharaja's Vamsavali. The importance of this inscription lies in the fact that *the inscription belongs to A. D. 1546* wherefrom it is seen that this Royagopuram must have been in existence long prior to this particular year and that it must have been constructed by some personage who must have lived prior to 1546 A. D., and this fact clinches the controversy raging as regards the constructor of the various Rayagopurams in the Presidency. In the face of this discovery the theory that Thirumalai Naik who reigned from 1623 to 1656 A. D. was the personage who constructed these Royagopurams could not be supported. Besides Thirumalai Naik the first independent King of Madura who

dared to throw off the yoke of Vijayanagar and sever every link that Madura had with that empire, could scarcely have been the person interested in inscribing in this Rayagopuram either the Royal Insignia of the Vijayanagar emperors or the names of the emperors of the Aravidu Vamsavali that are to be found there described at some length. Another important inscription of this monarch is M. E. R. 1-32 of the same year (first Avani Parabhava) and found on the northern wall of the circumambulatory verandah around the central shrine of this temple. It is a very long inscription in Tamil which gives details of the various duties pertaining to the Sibbandhis of this Devastanam. It purports to be a fresh revision of the duties as well as the privileges of the Sibbandhis (Nirvahamdars) both of the 'Samanyar' and 'Sozhiyar' classifications. It is also stated therein that the fixing of the duties closely follows those that were fixed for the Service Holders (Nirvahamdars) during the time of Mavali Banadarayar. One noteworthy feature of this inscription is that in those days it is found that the Emperors themselves were settling down the rules and regulations observable in the debutter institutions and that too in their immediate presence.

The names of the Nirvahamdars referred to therein are as follow:—

1. Soundaraththol Amudhar
2. Thirumalai Nambi
3. Alangara Nambi
4. Solamalai Nambi
5. Sadagopa Nambi
6. Deivasikhamani Nambi
7. Thirumalirunjolai Nambi
8. Vadamamalai Amudhar
9. Thiagamseida Amudhar
10. Seranarayana Amudhar
11. Kulasekhara Vizhipparayan
12. Soundararaja-priyan.

The inscription is styled as "Basha Paththaram". It is stated that there were 24 Kaniyakshi Nirvahams as follows:—

1. Thirupathi Kaniyakchi (10)
2. Nambimar Nirvaham (4)
3. Thirumalai Andar Mudaliar Tholappar (2)
4. Samanya

Battar (2) 5. Sozhiya Battar (2) 6. Koil Kanakku (2) 7. Samaya Kanakku Sethipa Rayar (1) 8. Kaikolar (1):— Total (24).

In the revision of the Establishment, the number of Sri-padamdars was fixed at 30 of whom 15 were to be Samanyar and 15 were to be Sozhiyar. Similarly the Paricharagams were fixed up at 10, of whom 5 were to be Samanyar and 5 were to be Sozhiyar. The remuneration for these Paricharagams was fixed at 3 Panams per head per month and some other minor details are also mentioned therein. An undertaking is given by all these Sibbandhis (Nirvahamdars) that they will discharge their duties as detailed in this "Basha-Paththiram," and they take the vow that if they fail to discharge their duties they will become 'Drohis' to the feet of the Lord, Sri Alagar and incur the sin of having murdered their respective father and mother on the banks of the Ganges. The inscription is also signed by the Sibbandhis (Nirvahamdars). Inscription M. E. R. 29/32 refers to the gift made by one Ilaiyanayinar alias Tiruppani Pillai as another gift of Thirumalai Deva Maharaja. Inscription M. E. R. 30/32 is in fragments. One refers to Achyutha Deva Maharaja and another mentions Queen Varadarajamma and Thirumalai Deva Maharaja.

It was during this reign the battle of Tallikotta took place on 23—1—1565 from which time started the decline and fall of the mighty Vijayanagar Empire.

Another monarch that we come across in the inscriptions here is *Sri Veera Venkata Deva Maharaja*, the Aravidu Monarch that reigned at Penukonda and who subsequently removed his Capital to Chandragiri. An inscription of his reign is found on the south wall of the Sri Padinettambadi Gopuram in the Temple. The inscription M. E. R. 91/29 bears the following date: 'Saka' 1511 — Virothi year — Dakshinayana—Varsharitu Sravana masa — 2nd date — Poorva paksha — navami — Mrigaseersha Nakshatra — Palava Karana (A. D. 1589). This

refers to a gift of a village called *Kavundanpatti* alias *Ramanujanallure* by Sundarattol Udayar Mavali Vanadarayar. The purpose of the gift is the perpetual feeding of 12 Srivaishnavas in the temple out of the income of this village, besides providing free quarters.

The Aravidu Dynasty. 1567—1644 A. D.

The kings of that line were:—

Thirumala 1567—1572 A. D. He was the brother of Rama Raja who was practically the founder of the Dynasty. He removed his capital to Penukonda in 1567 A. D. after the sack of Vijayanagar in 1565 A. D. This dynasty ruled at this capital till its extinction in 1613 A. D.

Sri Ranga I, son of Thirumala—1573 A. D.

Venkata I or Venkatapathi Deva Raja, 3rd son of Thirumala — 1585—1614 A. D. He removed his capital to Chandragiri. It was he that gifted to the British the Madras site for them to build the Fort St. George. He was a contemporary of the famous Robert de Nobili.

Sri Ranga II. 1642 A. D.

Viceroy of Vijayanagar at Madura.

Since Vijayanagar ruled Madura through its Viceroys and since almost all of these viceroys also took a deal of devotional interest in this Temple City their names also are noted below:

Narasu Nayakkan	1500 A. D.
Tennamma Nayakkan	1501 to 1515 A. D.
Tanjore Narasa Pillai	1515 to 1519 A. D.
Kurukuru Thimmappa	1519 to 1524 A. D.

The above viceroys were sent to Madura by Krishna Devarayar.

Kattiyam Kannayya or Kamayya Naidu	1524—1526 A. D.
Chinnappa	1526—1530 A. D.

Iyyakara Veyyappa (Jagadeva)	1530—1535 A. D.
Visvanatha Nayakkar Ayyan	1535—1544 A. D.

Visvanatha was one of the greatest statesman of all times. His elaborate inscriptions at the west of the Padinettambadi Gopuram (M. E. R. 88 and 89/28) give much valuable and interesting information. His great faithfulness to his master the Emperor which put to shade even his filial affection, when he offered to march in battle against his own father, the rebellious and treacherous Nagama, is a romantic chapter in Vijayanagar History. After his viceroyalty came Varathappa's (1544—1545 A. D.) then Dumbichchi's (1545—1546 A. D.) then again Visvanatha's (1546—1547 A. D.) and after whom came Vittalraja or Rama Raja the royal viceroy from Vijayanagar from 1547—1558 A. D. Many references to him are found in the inscriptions running down the Garbagraha at Sri Koodal Alagar Perumal Temple of Madura. From 1558—1560 A. D. there were three rulers by the names of Thimappa, Chellappa and Pattukkottai Virappa.

Nayak Kings of Madura subordinate to Vijayanagar:

1. *Visvanatha I.* 1558—1563 A. D. With 1558 A. D., the actual Viceroyalty ceased; and when in 1559 A. D. the Pandya line became extinct with the death of Veerapandya—Chandrasekhara's son — General Visvanatha who had married Princess Kanchala daughter of the Vijayanagar Rayar, was created by Vijayanagar as King of the Madura Country in subordination to the Empire of Vijayanagar on 15th Karthigai Rowthri (1559 A. D.) Viswanatha was one of the most ardent devotees of Lord Sri Sundararaja. He was the founder of the Nayak dynasty of Madura and its greatest sovereign. He constructed the dams Peranai and Chittanai across the river Vaigai.

When Visvanatha became king Ariyanayaka became his General and Prime Minister also. He was also General and Financier at the court of Vijayanagar before he came to Madura. The story of the Cobra-di-Capella shading from the Sun's rays

with its spread-out rearing hood the Vellala baby Ariyanayaka at Meyppadu village near Conjeevaram is a popular one even to this day. He was the 'patron saint' of Madura Poligars as Nelson puts it since it was he who constituted the 72 Palayagars of Madura for protecting the 72 Bastions of the Madura Fort that was extended and renovated by him. He was the builder of the thousand pillared Mandapam in Sri Meenakshi Temple and the donor of *Veppangulam* and *Kurunthangulam* villages to Lord Alagar. He was the founder of the Ariyanayaka Mudaliar Kattalai in this Temple. Ariyanayaka died in 1600 A. D. during the reign of Lingama and Visvappa.

2. *Kumara or Peria Krishnappa* 1563—1573 A. D. was the son of Visvanatha.

3. *Krishnappa alias Peria Veerappa* and *Visvanatha II* (sons of Periya Krishnappa) 1573—1595 A.D.

4. *Lingama* and (Viswappa) *Visvanatha III* (sons of Krishnappa) 1595—1602 A. D. They put up the Lingama Nayakkan Thope and constructed the Vapi (Big well) in the Alagar Hills.

5. *Muthukrishnappa* 1602—1609 A. D. He made Sada-yakka Thevar, (Sethupathi of Ramnad) in 1605 A. D. until which time the Ramnad Dynasty was driven to the North up to the Kaveri by the Kurumba Prince of Alakapuri. Robert de Nobili was preaching at Madura in 1606 A. D. during this reign.

6. *Muthu Virappa* 1609—1623 A. D.

7. *Thirumalai Naik* 1623—1659 A. D. During the reign of Thirumalai Naik the suzerainty of Vijayanagar was overthrown and Thirumalai Naik became an absolutely independent sovereign. He proclaimed his independence from the House of Vijayanagar. It was this Thirumalai Naik who constructed a Palace at Thirumalirunjolaimalai, the Yaga Salas of the Temple and also the Palliyarai with its ivory Vimanam and ivory

Palanquin, etc. and who was also responsible for the renovation of the Prakaras, the Abhisheka Mandapam and numerous other constructions. The inscription on the lintel of the Mandapam in front of the present Sri Krishna's shrine shows that the original Mandapam was constructed by Thirumalai Naik. He beautified the Madura Pagodas and built the famous palaces thereat. His endowments were many and numerous. Thirumalai Naik was so fond and kind and proud of his brother Muttalu Naicker or Kumaramuthu that he was associating his brother's name along with his own as his second in the Government. Wherever there may be statues of Thirumalai Naik and his consort, we may notice those of his brother and the latter's consort too opposite to or adjoining them, and this is particularly so in this temple in more than one place.

8. *Muthu Alagiri or Muthu Virappa II* 1659–1660 A.D.

9. *Chokkanadha* 1660–1682 A. D. His famous Minister was Chinnathambi Mudaliar. It was in this reign in 1675 A. D. that Ekkoji invaded Madura. The great comet was visible for three days in 1680 A. D. An inscription M. E. R. 28-32 belonging to the period of Chokkanadha Naik, bearing the year Saka 1587–Prabhava—Panguni 7th, refers to a gift of certain lands endowed by Chetlure Narayana Iyengar for certain festivals in the Temple. This is one of the most interesting and instructive inscriptions in the temple. Reference is made in the inscription to the existence of Sri Vedanthacharya's Sannadhi; the details of the Temple Dittams for Nithyappadi and certain Viseshappadis are very elaborately mentioned in this.

10. *Renga Krishna Muthu Virappa III* 1682–1689 A. D. Mangammal mother of Renga Krishna was regent from 1682 to 1704 A. D.

11. *Vijaya Ragunatha Chokkanadha* son of Renga Krishna 1704–1731 A. D.

12. *Meenakshi Ammal* (wife of Vijaya Ragunatha who fled to Sivaganga) 1731—1736 A. D.
- 13. *Bangaru Thirumala* (adopted son) 1736 A. D.
14. *Vijaya Kumara* 1752 A. D.

The Nawabs of Arcot and their allies the East India Company.

With Bangaru Thirumala the Nayak Dynasty of Madura became extinct and the country passed into Muhammadan Rule and practical anarchy prevailed. When Chanda Sahib, General of Dost Ali Khan, Nawab of Arcot, was sent to conquer the southern kingdom for being given to his son Safdar Ali Khan he captured the country and its Queen Meenakshi by fraud and chicanery. It was Chanda Sahib (1736—40 A. D.) that first seized all Temple Lands of the Madura District including those of Alagar and annexed them to the State. From 1737 to 1801 A.D. the Nawabs of Arcot were nominally in Sovereignty over the Madura country, but a practical state of anarchy prevailed, a short resume of which will be relevant since the Thirumalirunjolai Temple suffered much during the Muhammadan Rule. From 1736 to 1739 A. D. Chanda Sahib was in supremacy when the Temples underwent untold misery and hardship. When in 1739 Raghuji Bhonsle (at the people's request) marched towards the south to save Madura from the tyranny of the Moslems and when Dost Ali Khan was defeated and killed in an engagement at Pondicherry, Chanda Sahib immediately surrendered Madura to the Satara Mahrattas. From 1739 to 1744 Mahratta Rule prevailed. It was during this time that the accounts and records of the Devasthanams came to be kept in the Mohdi script. Then followed the invasion of Madura by Nizam-ul-Mulk, the first Nizam between 1744—1748 A. D. and the Mahratta Governors Morari Rao and Appaji Rao representatives of Raghuji Bhonsle of Satara were driven away from Madura (1744 A. D.) The appointment of Anwarrudin Khan as

Nawab of Arcot, Carnatic and Madura took place in 1744 A. D. He in his turn gave this country to his two sons Mahomed Ali and Makhfuz Khan at his death in 1748 A. D. In 1749 A. D. Abdul Rahiman another son of Anwarrudin was appointed Governor of Madura. But Allam Khan, a partisan of Chanda Sahib, usurped the seat in 1751 A. D. And after the death of Allam Khan in 1752 A. D. Madura was left in the hands of Governor Mayana and two other nominees. And it was then in 1752 A. D. (20th Karthigai) Vijayakumara, son of Bangaru Thirumala was crowned as the king of Madura by Mayana and others with the help of Ramnad and Sivaganga. But unable to retain his sovereignty, the Nayak House fled to Vellakurichi in Sivaganga soon after. And on 5—3—1755, Madura was surrendered to Colonel Heron by Governor Mayana and he fled to Thirumohure. Colonel Heron followed the usurper and attacked and captured Thirumohure Fort and Temple and carried away the Pagoda Idols as booty and left the administration of Madura in the hands of a Faujdar or Military Governor and an Amaldar or Civil Governor. At Thirumohure Colonel Heron with a rashness, says Nelson, "of which an officer in his position ought to have been heartily ashamed carried a torch to the gates of the Temple and set fire to some bundles of straw which he caused to be piled against them". The troops were permitted to plunder the famous Temple when they carried away all the idols of worship there. Orme justly observes that this act brought upon them who were guilty of it a vast amount of odium and detestation.

From 20—5—1755 Barkatulla or Danish Mund Khan was made Governor of Madura. His misappropriation of the Temple funds and his sequestration of the Temple Revenues for state purposes and his heavy hand over the Hindus are painful episodes in Debutter History. Even the minimum padi-tharams to the temple were stopped by him.

On 28th and 29th May, 1755 Colonel Heron marched through the Nattam Pass where a big battle took place. In this battle Colonel Heron was defeated and all his Troops were massacred and many of the Temple Idols were recovered. Better days dawned and on 6—4—1756 Yusoof Khan was made Governor of Madura. After he became Governor of Madura, he had to contest against very heavy odds, both from internal and external enemies. Madura itself was in the hands of rebels and in October 1757 Sholavandan Fort was captured by Hyder Ali of Mysore and he plundered the country round about Madura. The mutilation of the Idols in the Nayakkar Kalyana Mahal in Thirumalirunjolai Malai, the plunder of its vast and phenomenal wealth, the final devastation of the City and Fort of Alagapuri now seen in ruins, and the demolition of the Palace of the Nayaks thereat, are all stated to have been the result partly of Hyder's depredations. Yusoof marched against Hyder and in November 1757 a second battle at the south of the Nattam pass between Yusoof Khan and Hyder Ali took place and the latter was defeated and he fled to Dindigul. Until 1763 A. D. Madura was under the Governorship of Mohamed Yusoof Khan. The first act of his Governorship, after Madura surrendered into his hands on 8—9—1758, was the restoration of the revenues in a large measure back to the Sri Kallalagar and other Devasthanams concerned and his redressing the Temple grievances caused by Danish Mend Khan alias Barkat Ali. This great and distinguished warrior and statesman unconquered and unconquerable in battle and the gallant soldier of many a campaign was treacherously seized and "with a want of mercy which at this time seems all but inexcusable was hung like a dog" says Nelson. His remains are stated to be interred in the "Khan Sahib's Pallivasal" at Madura. Of him Col. Fullerton says, "His whole administration denoted vigour and effect, his justice was unquestioned, his word unalterable, his measures were happily conceived, and firmly executed and the guilty had no refuge from punishment"

(his example shows) wisdom, vigour and integrity are of no climate or complexion." Such in short was the character of the administrator who saw the injustice of the confiscation of the debutter properties of Sri Kallalagar and other Devasthanams and had them, when he came to power, restored in part at least. The peace and quiet which Mohamed Yusoof Khan was able to restore in this turbulent and anarchical time and part of the country was but short-lived. For, immediately after his death in 1764, the Kallars of Melur gave too much trouble, and the East India Company had to send five Battallions of sepoy and 1500 cavalry under Captain Rumley. On the Kallar's refusal to surrender and consequent upon their armed and hostile preparations Captain Rumley surrounded Vellalapatti, the Kallar's stronghold, about four miles from Alagar Hills, fired at the Kallars and set the whole village to flames. 3000 of the Kallars were then slain in the engagement. Defeated and discomfited the Kallars surrendered to the Captain whom they then hailed as "Rumley Swami".

Then from 1764 to 1785 practical anarchy prevailed once more and Hyder's second invasion took place in 1780 when at last in 1785 Madura was annexed by the British formally and the first Collector Mr. McLeod joined duty on 6—9—1790. Anarchy continued till 1796 and Mr. McLeod and his successors were only Collectors in name till the appointment of Mr. Thomas Bowyer Hurdis on 31—8—1796, who administered the country with some real power and usefulness till 1803.

The East India Company—1801-1817.

When Mr. Hurdis the 1st Collector of the Madura Country took charge of this District he simultaneously also assumed the Trusteeship of this Devasthanam in 1801, and then again as Trustee under Regulation 17 of 1802. With unflinching energy and with the greatest devotion he tried to evolve and restore some order and form where utter confusion and chaos erstwhile

prevailed in this ancient but ramified and complicated religious institution. Though valuable materials were available for his help in the vast inscriptions in this temple to restore perfect order and form in the Temple administration, still, considering the vast work that lay before him when for the first time he took up his charge of this Madura country and also the administration of this temple on behalf of the British Government, he without going into the details, carried on as it were a sort of summary administration of this temple which apparently was all that was possible at such a time and under such a situation and circumstances. The credit of reducing *in a way* to record the pre-existing customs and practices to be observed in the temple and the services therein and the emoluments attached thereto though at least in a fragmentary way were all his own. And the records and settlements and orders of Mr. Hurdis form as it were the MAGNA CHARTA of this temple.

The Board of Revenue—1817-1863.

Guided by these orders, settlements, and records of Mr. Hurdis, was the administration of this temple carried on by the succeeding Collectors of this District till 1817 when the management was assumed by the Board of Revenue who carried on the administration from 1817 till 1863 when the administration of Religious institutions were handed over to the Temple Committees under Act XX of 1863.

The Temple Committees—1863-1929.

When the change in the management and handing over charge of the administration to the Temple Committees took place in 1863, by some great and unforeseen misfortune or misadventure certain initial errors were committed, which created a deal of chaos, and confusion in the administration of the Sri Kallalagar and other Devasthanams. When the Government divested itself of its position of Trusteeship from itself and delegated its functions to the temple committees, which newly created

bodies having had no part or lot in the temple administration or in the knowledge thereof for such a long spell of 63 years as stated above, knew practically nothing of the complicated details of this administration in the absence of Records of the previous Administration. Some of the chief initial errors were as follows:—

- (i) Non-Delivery of the Devastanam Records.
- (ii) Non-Delivery of the Devastanam Villages.
- (iii) Depriving Lord Alagar of the Service Inam Villages and the issuing of the Title deeds in the name of the Service Holders instead of in the name of Lord Alagar.
- (iv) The Governmental appropriation of the Poruppu.
- (v) The gradual interference with and final assumption by the Government of Lord Alagar's Hills.

Non-delivery of the Records of the Devastanam:—

If those valuable records of this administration were handed over to the Committee, these would have gone to show:—
(i) The properties which the Devastanam possessed. (ii) The incomes derived and derivable from them. (iii) The administrative correspondence, proceedings, orders etc., that would go to establish not only the rights of the temple but also its liabilities to those that may have to do anything with this temple whether they may belong to the establishments or outside agencies and which would act as it were the established Debutter law on the customs, usages, sampradayams etc., etc., of this ancient temple
(iv) The various peculiarities and importances of ceremonials, festivals and nityappadi rites and observances followed and given effect to in the worships connected therewith. (v) The history of the Sri Kallalagar Devastanam Temple so far as could be gathered therefrom.

The administrative records of this Devastanam during the Governmental management thereof from 1801 to 1863 A. D. are

absolutely of no interest or use to the Government, while they are the life fountain as it were to this administration. It goes without saying that especially in cases in which the rights of the temple and the obligations of those connected with the temple come into operation it has now become so easy for the obligors to make light of the temple's rights, to suppress their duties or obligations to the irreparable detriment of the Devasthanam, resulting in the impoverishment of the temple's possessions, wealths and incomes and in ineffectiveness of the services and inefficiency in control and in irreligious irreverence in the mind of the temple goers and also in a consciousness of pitiful impotence to do any effective good in the mind of the administrator. Is it not just and necessary that this temple should be restored all the documents referred to above, before utter ruin overtakes such ancient shrines like these, in these days of irreligious irreverences and iconoclastic movements?

Resultant confusion:— The non-possession of these important records have also been the cause of very great confusion in the administration of this Devasthanam besides causing untold losses, sufferings and hardships, as noted hereunder:—

(i) Trespasses and occupation of temple properties run galore.

(ii) Even the daily routine of duties by the temple subordinates are sadly neglected and could not be enforced with rigour and discipline in the absence of records that would help or support a disciplined administration.

(iii) The administration is in complete oblivion as to what are all its properties, what are all their rights and obligations, what are all the income and expences of this institution etc. in short, what all they own and what all they are bound to protect. It would be extremely painful reading to note that it was in ignorance of these things, this institution has lost a good deal and its very existence has been seriously jeopardised. The

three outstanding instances are:—(a) The partial divestment of the Manibham villages (b) The loss of the Hafta Devastanam villages and (c) The assumption and annexation of the Sri Alagar's Hills which is the Great Temple sung of by the saints.

Service Manibhams:— In this institution, the deity has been endowed with extensive villages out of the income of which the services of the temple were maintained — the service holders to enjoy the income so long as they did their duties properly and so long as they fulfilled the required conditions for service. The service holders were called Nirvahamdars. These service holders or Nirvahamdars took full and ample advantage of the confused condition of affairs when the management changed hands from the Government to the Committees and began to lord over the temple administration trying to appropriate to their personal uses these religious service inam lands which were granted by the ancient kings and pious worshippers to this temple which was the absolute grantee, rent free either partially or wholly. When Mr. Hurdis assumed charge of the administration, he for the sake of convenience, devised a novel, idea of handing over the villages belonging to the Devastanam to the Service Holders along with Pattayams detailing the conditions of Service and enjoyment of the Holding which arrangement could at best be a temporary one and which could neither bind Mr. Hurdis himself nor his successors nor this institution for ever. The conditions imposed by Mr. Hurdis are in each case that the land will be liable to resumption or zufti the moment it is found that the services were not performed either properly or not at all or that such manibhams are in any way alienated, and at the same time entailing loss of office and their supersession.

During the Inam settlement, proper materials having not been probably and possibly placed before him, the Inam Commissioner, issued the title deeds of these lands and villages, not in the name of this temple and the deity thereof who were

the grantees thereof and for whom they were endowed, but issued them in the name of the oft changing service holders. This was against the principle enunciated in the preamble to Reg. VII of 1817. The appointment or recognition or continuance in office of the various service holders ultimately rested with the temple administration, the service holder for the time being, being allowed the license to enjoy the income alone of the properties—the ultimate right, title, and interest in the endowed lands and villages always resting in the temple or the deity. Ignorance of this basic principle and non-representations of these rights by the then Devastanam administration might have been responsible for the wrong and illegal and unjust procedure involved in the issuing of the title deeds in the names of the service holders.

This irregular procedure of depriving the Devastanam of its right to have the Title Deed in its own name and issuing it in the name of the Service Holder has been found to create many an anomaly and a dead lock. The right of the Service Holders in these Inam villages was but a privilege to enjoy the income only in lieu of salary. Their rights would have to be recognised only thus far and no further. But the mischief that is wrought now by the grant of the T. D. in the name of the Service Holders is incalculable and needs no elaboration.

Of course when proper materials were placed before the Inam Commissioner for rectifications of such mistakes they were no doubt rectified, by them, by cancelling the Title Deeds issued in the name of the Service holders and reissuing the Title Deeds in the name of the Deity as was done in the instance of the Coimbatore Devastanam Committee which has been restored by such rectification of the Inam Commissioner's mistakes, the rights of the temple administration to resume the lands in cases where it comes to their notice that the service was not rendered or that the manibhams were alienated (vide G. O. No. 164 Rev. Mis. dated 16—2—1893) wherein, in no uncertain language

age the Government has laid out after a very deep deliberation, the wholesome principle that "the Servants of the Temple should not be treated as independent inamdars. This power (Powers of Resumption etc.) also should be restored back to the Devasthanam and the R. D. O's powers of interference removed."

Appropriation of the Villages of the Devasthanam — Lord Alagar's Temple: now practically a Landless institution.

This great and ancient institution is second to none in all India in point of sanctity and popularity. But one would be surprised to see that such a mighty institution possesses practically no immovable property worth the name excepting a few acres of land and a few buildings which altogether may not fetch even one or two thousand rupees per annum.

Lord Alagar's ancient possessions:—Ancient inscriptions and records show that this Devasthanam owned very vast estates and a large extent of lands extending for miles and miles to the north of the Vaigai. The famous Sri Alagar hills area wherein the Temple is situate belonged to Sri Alagar. Innumerable villages once under the possession and enjoyment of the Devasthanam are no longer so now. Constant changes in the ruling dynasties of the Pandya Nad and the intervening anarchies and civil wars had contributed in no small measure to the dwindling of the vast and extensive domains of Sri Alagar into the present interesting ruins of the ancient Fort of Alagapuri with its still mighty and extensive walls and debris. Little by little gradually all the vast estates of Sri Alagapuri inclusive of certain rich and fertile villages, some scores in number and producing enormous revenues, were forcibly taken hold of, by daring and adventurous and impious usurpers, some of such confiscations having been made by the Nawab Chanda Saheb, Barkat Ali, etc. etc. Latterly of course Nawab Wallajah's Amaldar or general Md. Yusuf Khan, saw the monstrous injustice of this deprivation and confiscation of the villages of this ancient Devasthanam and tried to ameliorate

in a small measure the grievous injustice perpetrated to this and certain other ancient shrines and attempted to substitute for these confiscations a money payment of Ch. 12000 for the Padi-tharam expenses of this temple in Fasli 1176 which Nawab Wallajah afterwards reduced to 6000 Ch. P. A.

Mr. Hurdis' assumption, enquiry and findings.

When the British Government assumed charge of the Administration of this province and simultaneously with that the administration of the Sri Kallalagar and other institutions also, on 31—7—1801 by the terms of a treaty between Nawab Wallajah and the East India Co., the 1st administrator Mr. Hurdis scrutinized the justice and propriety of the confiscation of these extensive villages and the grant of a money equivalent of 12000 Ch. at first and then the reduction of the same to 6000 chakrams etc., as stated above and came to the following findings and conclusions viz:—

(i) That the villages belonged to the Sri Kallalagar etc., Pagodas and that they were enjoyed by them was unquestionable.

(ii) That they were confiscated by the preceding Governments and that they were never restored was also true.

(iii) That Mohamed Yusoof Khan first fixed a commutation of 12,000 ch. in Fasli 1167 in view of the loss of the confiscated villages to these Pagodas.

(iv) That the Nawab Wallajah subsequently reduced them to 6000 chakrams in F. 1175.

(v) That these 12000 and then 6000 chakrams were at first paid from out of the Wallajah's coffers.

(vi) That subsequently Md. Yusoof Khan struck upon the idea of meeting these 6000 chakrams not from the Nawab's treasury but from levying and exacting a quit-rent or poruppu (but really reviving the Devastanam's poruppu due to it from

its service-holders) upon the rent free service manibham lands endowed to the temples and allotted to the temple servants for their maintenance so long as they were rendering their services properly.

(vii) That this poruppu levied and collected from the service Manibham villages of Lord Alagar was paid back to the Paditharam expenses of Lord Alagar's temple.

Mr. Hurdis' proposals on the above findings and conclusions.

Having arrived at the above findings and conclusions Mr. Hurdis came to the decision that the grant of 6000 ch. where 12000 was previously granted, was unfair and that the grant of 12000 ch. P. A. should be again restored for ever, under certain restrictions and that the villages and their Revenues should be permanently annexed to the Circar. Mr. Hurdis opined that "this proposed sum would amply suffice if properly expended for the performance of all necessary services and ceremonies. And on the other hand, there would not be any superfluous funds at the disposal of the Church (Devastanam), out of which Brahmins could pay for their indulgence in their habitual vices"!

Mr. Hurdis further opined :—

"That the poruppu ought not to be held to be part of the Jama, because it was always paid back to the Hafta Devastanam as soon as collected, in order to provide for the paditharam expenses, the burden of which fell on the circar when it first assumed all the lands of the Hafta Devastanams". Hence he thought it advisable therefore to omit this item in his Jamabandi statements and which he did and was continuing to pay back to the managers of the temples for application to the paditharam, the poruppu (now reduced during Mr. Hurdis' time to ch. 5506-7-12) collected from the Service Holders or Sibbandi Manibham villages"—a policy of robbing Peter to pay Peter himself.

Government Order dated 3—1—1803 re: the restoration of the villages.

But with these proposals of the Collector Mr. Hurdis, the Government did not agree; and so the Board of Revenue wrote back to the Collector on 3—1—1803 stating that the assumed Devastanam villages must be given up to the Pagodas. They added in their memorable communication:—

"The subject of the Devastanam lands is of great importance to the happiness of the people, and the attention paid to the interests of the pagodas by the immediate officers of the Government has been attended with the beneficial consequences to the religious establishments in the different parts of the Peninsula. The Governor-in-council being therefore desirous, that the ceremonies and festivals of the temples at Madura should be re-established by the appropriation of the former funds for their support, has been pleased to direct, that you proclaim the restoration of the lands resumed from the pagodas by the Late Government."

How strong are the orders of the Governor-in-council and how just and liberal their judgment and how explicit and peremptory their orders were, could be judged by the wording of the above orders. But unfortunately these orders were issued to an Officer who held strong contrary views and prejudices in the matter. Mr. Hurdis was practically the 1st Collector of the Madura country as it was then known. Evidently he thought that his views and conclusions were not such as could be so lightly ignored or set at nought, by the orders of the Board of Revenue and nay, even by the orders of the Governor-in-council.

Government Order not given effect to :

In the result he did not obey the orders above referred to and did not proclaim the restoration of the resumed villages as per the Governor-in-council's order of 3—1—1803.

It should be also remembered that there was no effective voice to be raised in support of the interests of these Devastanams. For, the Government itself as loco parentis was administering these Devastanams as Trustees and if any justice had to be done, it must depend upon the good sense and conscience of the Collector-Trustee, and nobody else.

Collector Mr. Parker's proposal dated 14—4—1849.

Then on 14—4—1849 Collector Mr. Parker made a proposal to the Government for restoring about 22 out of 58 villages belonging to the Sri Kallalagar and 6 other Devastanams. But nothing came of this proposal.

Collector Mr. Clarke's proposal dated 12—8—1859.

Again, on 12—8—1859 Collector Mr. Clarke made a recommendation in pursuance of the proceedings of the Board of Revenue, under order dated 26—2—1859 upon an order from the Government, wherein he stated that not only all the assumed Devastanam villages should be restored back to the Sri Kallalagar and other respective Devastanams to whom they severally belonged, but also the surplus revenue which the Government had collected and of which they were accountable to the Sri Kallalagar etc. Devastanams should also be handed back. This surplus according to Mr. Clarke amounted in 1859 to Rs. 13,32,269 and odd in favour of these Devastanams during their period of management, after deducting the amount of the annual allowance paid since 1802, and after meeting all expenses incurred in repairs and other charges.

After stating what Mr. Hurdis had done in this matter and the proposal of Mr. Parker referred to above, Mr. Clarke observes that "he (Mr. Parker) appears to have over-looked one very material point in the consideration of this subject viz; the order of the Government to proclaim the restoration of these lands whereby it appears to me they gave up altogether any right which they may have derived from the Mahomedan Govern-

ment in these lands and constituted themselves simply the Trustees of these endowments, on behalf of the pagodas.

"I therefore," wrote Mr. Clarke "conceive that we are morally as well as in strict justice bound to restore the whole of the villages with their immense revenue of Rs 73,336—14—8 to the pagodas."

But little was done upon this report and recommendation of 12—8—1859 of that generous-minded Collector Mr. Clarke up to this year of Grace. And this great and ancient institution has to rest content with the Dastic or annual allowance of about Rs. 5000—0—0 sanctioned on 28—1—1802 in lieu of the vast and fertile villages about 58 in number assumed by the Government.

Resumption of poruppu.

As mentioned already the service-holders were given the privilege of enjoying the income of the Manibham villages in lieu of salary. Among other conditions attached to these manibham holdings such as spiritual, canonical, educational and physical qualifications and due and faithful and obedient services, there was an additional liability on the part of the Manibham holder to carve out a portion of the income of these manibham villages and remit it to the Treasury or Amisham of Lord Alagar for the general expenses of the temple, and known as poruppu as already stated. This poruppu from the Devastanam land which was always (from time immemorial) going into the coffers of the Devastanam was latterly and illegally diverted to the Government treasury without understanding its nature, origin, rights, customs and practice. When the Government were managing this Devastanam, their agents were collecting these for the temple during the 63 years of their management. When afterwards they divested themselves of their control over this institution, they did not restore these Devastanam Poruppus to the Devastanam itself and appropriated the same to the Govern-

ment Treasury, and what was all along and hitherto collected for the temple, thus came to be diverted to the Government treasury quite ignorant of their origins. How and when, during the Government's Trusteeship this diversion happened, we are not now in a position to state accurately. But it must have been somewhere between 1801 to 1863 during which period the Government were acting as Trustees of this institution.

Appropriation of 'Sri Alagar's Hills' by the Government.

Another equally important item of property also which we have lost very recently, is the famous "Sri Alagar's Hills" otherwise known as "Then Thiruppathi". These Hills were till 1886 in our absolute possession and enjoyment. But by some greivous error the Government annexed these Hills. The enjoyment of Sri Alagar Hills by the Devastanam has now practically vanished except in respect of a few items as per G. O. No. 2111 Ms. Development, dated 25—8—1939. The Government which managed the Hills as the Trustees of the Temple till 1863 and which handed over the Trusteeship to the new body of Trustees under Act XX of 1863 cannot with any consistency annex these Hills and thereby attempt to extinguish the proprietary rights of the temple to the Hills. How the Temple administration also failed to advance their claim to these Hills when the Government attempted at annexation, remains a mystery.

The Hindu Religious Endowments Board.

After the advent of the H. R. E. Act and the Board constituted thereunder, the Temple committee of this Devastanam was abolished in the year 1929, and the administration of this Devastanam is now directly under the aegis of the H. R. E. Board itself.
